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ABSTRACT

This guide provides information and strategies for Kentucky parents to become better partners in the education of their primary school children. Chapter 1 of the guide outlines a typical school day for a primary school student in Kentucky. Chapter 2 explains how children learn and how instruction will change as Kentucky schools move toward greater use of developmentally appropriate practices. Characteristics of a quality primary school learning environment are identified in chapter 3. Chapter 4 reviews the learning goals and outcomes used in Kentucky schools, and explains the assessment of students' abilities in reading, writing, and math. Chapter 5 offers suggestions for parents to participate in their child's education. Suggestions for parents relate to visiting their child's classroom, attending parent-teacher conferences, helping their child with homework, helping their child learn more effectively, and performing volunteer work at school. Chapter 6 discusses parents' reading with their children, and provides lists of children's books. Frequently asked questions about primary schools are answered in chapter 7. Appendices include Kentucky laws on primary school, Kentucky regulations on primary school, and a discussion of the use of television to foster children's school readiness. A glossary of terms commonly used in primary education and a 27-item reference list are provided. (BC)

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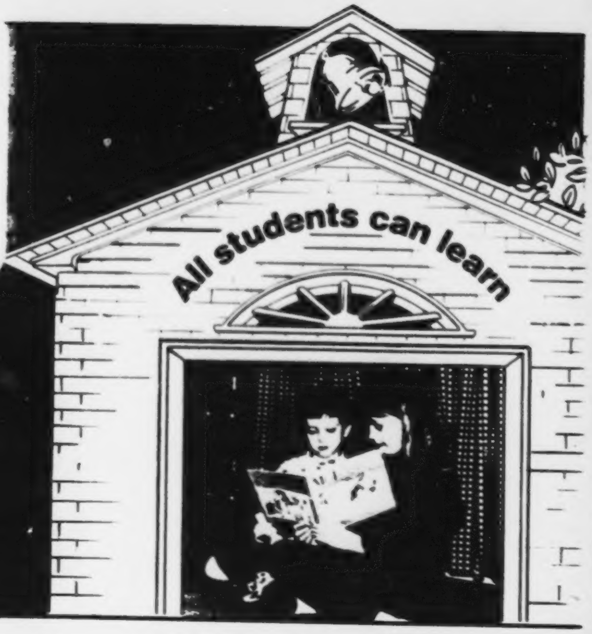

A Resource Guide for Parents

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The Partnership for
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Goals for Each Kentucky Student

(1) Communication skills necessary to function in a complex and changing civilization;

(2) Knowledge to make economic, social, and political choices;

(3) Understanding of governmental processes as they affect the community, the state, and the nation;

(4) Sufficient self-knowledge and knowledge of his mental and physical wellness;

(5) Sufficient grounding in the arts to enable each student to appreciate his or her cultural and historical heritage;

(6) Sufficient preparation to choose and pursue his life's work intelligently; and

(7) Skills to enable him to compete favorably with students in other states.

Source: Kentucky Revised Statutes, Section 158.645.

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The Primary School:
A Resource Guide for Parents

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The Prichard Committee has also published *School-Based Decision Making: A Guide for School Council Members and Others*, *The School Answer Book: Citizens' Guide to Kentucky School Law* and *A School Budget Primer: Citizens' Guide to School Finance.*

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Robert F. Sexton
Executive Director
The Prichard Committee

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Dear Parents,

The children of Kentucky are our most valuable resource. We must devote our energies to preparing them for roles as successful citizens and workers. This process begins by providing the best possible learning experiences for children during the primary years.

The Primary School, as mandated by the Kentucky Education Reform Act (KERA), provides for all children the educational opportunity to grow and develop as a "whole." Experiences in primary classrooms foster success and self-confidence, based on the child's unique needs and rate of learning.

My personal enthusiasm for the Primary Program has increased as I have observed children in schools more actively engaged than ever in writing, problem solving and reading.

To work effectively, this program needs your help as parents. Please get involved in the education of your children. We know that academic achievement is positively impacted by parents who become active partners with the schools. The Primary School: A Resource Guide for Parents provides information and strategies to help you become a better informed partner.

Sen. Ed Ford
Chair, Senate Education Committee
Kentucky General Assembly

Chapter 1

WHAT WILL CHILDREN EXPERIENCE IN PRIMARY SCHOOL?

A Day with Amanda in Primary School

A DAY IN THE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Amanda is an imaginary child, however, photographs depict many real classrooms in Kentucky.

Come spend a day with Amanda as she works, plays and learns with her classmates, teachers and others. Keep in mind that Amanda's classroom may be different from others in the same school, the district and even throughout the state.

As Amanda, 7, enters the school there is a banner welcoming her and introducing the school theme, "New Beginnings." The halls are filled with examples of work produced by the primary children: poems, stories, charts, paintings and murals. All work is displayed at a child's eye level so the children can enjoy the results of their efforts.

Amanda enters the classroom and is greeted by her teacher, Mrs. Roberts. Amanda's class is called the "Bears" room to distinguish it from other animal families in the school. The class has just completed a topic study on baby bears as part of the theme "New Beginnings." Today Amanda notices a bulletin board with baby pictures of herself and her classmates. Her classmates get to guess who they are.

Amanda and her classmates begin to organize for the day. First Amanda hangs up her coat. Then she returns her papers to the proper tote tray labeled "homework" and indicates her lunch and snack preference by placing her name on a chart.

It is Amanda's turn to feed and take care of the class rabbit. Later, she checks her mailbox in the classroom post office for papers and maybe a note from her teacher or letters from her classmates. She finds several notes and cards welcoming the new baby boy who has joined Amanda's family.

Journals

Settled for the day, Amanda takes her journal from a shelf to make her daily entry. All the journals are different, based on each child's developmental phase in writing. Some have wide lines, some lines are closer together on notebook paper, some are on large sheets of unlined paper. Some have many pages, some have only a few lines or drawings.

Some of the children begin to write or draw immediately. Others glance around the room looking for ideas. The teacher offers some stimulation: "When I was a 2-year-old..." or "When a new baby came to my house...."

Amanda finds a seat at a table with five other children to begin her journal entry. There are no assigned seats in this classroom and Amanda chooses with whom she wishes to sit for this activity. Crayons, markers, pencils, rulers, glue and scissors are located in the center of the table in caddies.

Children learn to write by writing every day. These students are writing their daily journal entries.

All children at the table share the supplies. On the back of Amanda's chair there is an apron to hold her personal belongings such as the photograph of her new baby brother, a book and supplies she will need later in the day when she works on a special project. When Amanda moves to another place in the room she can take her apron with her.

Every day this class sings "The Star Spangled Banner" and says the pledge of allegiance.

Class Meeting

The next activity is a class meeting. All children are called to sit on a rug around the teacher. After a few minutes of conversation, the children stand to pledge allegiance to the flag. Seated again they recognize birthdays and other special days and sing the team song they wrote. They sing other songs the music teacher has taught them that relate to the "New Beginnings" theme.

This morning they sing "Old McDonald Had a Farm" and others written on chart paper. Several songs had been written by classmates and set to music with the help of the music teacher.

Some children share items brought from home. Amanda shares the photograph of her baby brother. Announcements are made and the lunch menu is discussed.

The children participate in the daily calendar activities. The day of the week and the month are discussed. A weather report is given. The weather is recorded on a graph so the children can make comparisons and can interpret important weather information.

The day's date is discussed and they determine if the number for the day is an odd or even one. The children determine this is the 24th day of school by counting days on the calendar, then they brainstorm number sentences that equal 24; for example, 12+12, 23+1, 25-1, 6x4, 100-80+4 and on and on until the children have exhausted their ideas. They share their thoughts by holding up slates on which they have written equations.

At calendar time, children learn the days of the week, the months and year, record the weather on a weather graph and do math problems with the numbers in that date.

At the close of this class meeting the children are given a color-coded contract that indicates the centers where they will work later in the day.

Reading

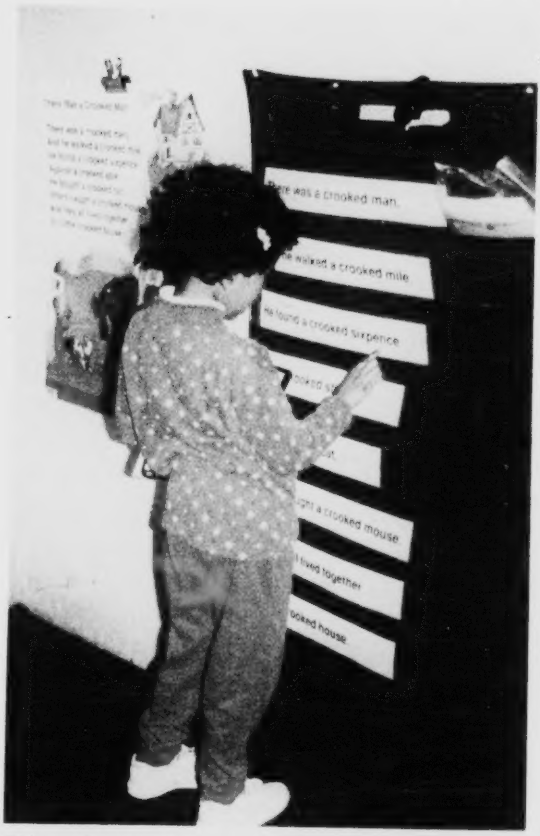
The children become very quiet as the teacher settles in a rocking chair and holds a big book titled "The Very Hungry Caterpillar" by Eric Carle. The teacher selected this piece ofliterature to support their theme of "New Beginnings."

In primary classrooms children are read to every day.

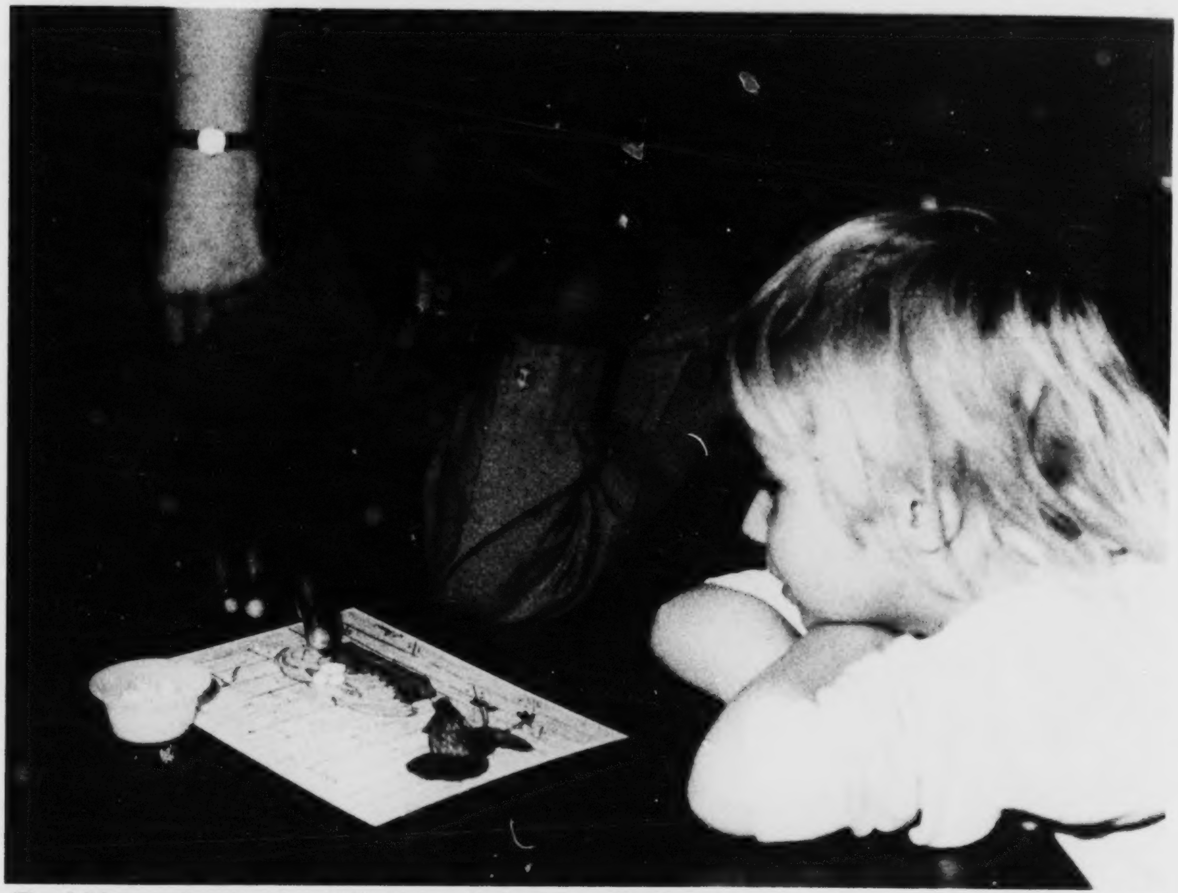
This is a story about the beginnings of a caterpillar. Beginning as an egg on a leaf, the caterpillar eats more and more each day until it becomes a butterfly. She reads the story to the children several times and the children begin to read with her or say words they recognize. Even the youngest children begin to predict the words that will follow and what might happen next.

At the end of the shared reading, each child selects one follow-up activity. In groups of two or more, the children move to selected places in the classroom to work. One group recreates the story with pictures using transparency film and colored marking pens. Another group makes puppets using paper plates and recreates the story by making characters of the food items in the original story.

A third group recreates the story using sentence strips and a pocket chart. Group four reads the story into a tape recorder and produces sound effects. This will later be placed in the listening center along with a big book made by group five. Group six surveys classmates to determine which of the foods the caterpillar ate are their favorites. They place the results of the survey on a graph. Children in group seven are given a brown bag of items they use to recreate the story through drama. At the end of the allocated time, all groups share their work and receive applause from their classmates.


ere was a crooked man.
e walked a crooked mile
He found a crooked sixpence
ght a crooked mouse
lived together
ooked house

This student is using a pocket chart to put sentences of a rhyme in the correct order.



The children are learning math skills by counting beans -- a "hands on" activity. Photo by Jamie Bloomfield

Math

Math comes next. This is the time during the day the children work on skills, develop an understanding of concepts and solve problems. These activities are related to the "New Beginnings" theme. Today, the children have been divided into three groups, determined by their readiness for the particular tasks to be undertaken.

One group has been given 10 "animal babies in a family," either frogs, ladybugs or butterflies made from beans that have been painted. The children use the beans to show the addition of number combinations up to 10. As the teacher tells a short story about the babies, the children count and lay out the combinations.

The children in the second group are given small slates. They write the number combinations as the teacher tells the story. Then the children in the second group share their responses with each other and the teacher to determine correctness. Next, they work with an assigned "buddy" in the first group to show the relationship of the written number combinations with the objects (bean babies).

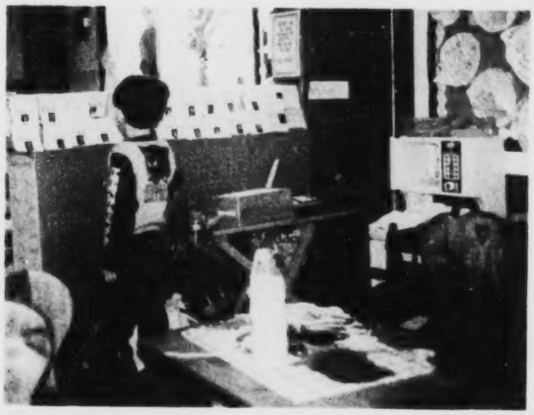
While the teacher is providing direct instruction for these two groups, Amanda's group is writing and illustrating stories using the number combinations. These will be placed in the classroom Publishing Company and subsequently compiled into a class book for all to enjoy.

Center Time

Now it is time for centers. Using the color-coded contracts, children move to their places of work. Most of the children will work in several centers during this time. The centers are special places in the room where children go to complete a task or assignment. They reinforce concepts and skills taught through the theme. Some are ongoing and others change according to interests and needs.

The full-day children visit centers twice each day, once in the morning and once again during the afternoon. The half-day children visit once daily during either the morning or afternoon.

Let's explore the centers in Amanda's classroom.



The post office center in this classroom has slots for each child with name and photograph for easy identification.

POST OFFICE. Located in the post office are 4 by 6 inch mailboxes made from milk cartons, one for each child. There are envelopes, old and new, of all shapes and sizes. There are many canceled stamps collected from home. Pens, pencils, markers and erasers are available along with various types and sizes of stationary, note paper and postcards. Also included are envelopes from junk mail and a rubber stamp that says "First Class." Today the children may write a letter, note or card to friends or family members. Many choose to write and illustrate a card to Amanda welcoming the new baby boy to her family. Amanda decides to write a letter to her new baby brother.

LIBRARY. The reading area is located in a loft built as a PTA project. In this area the children find many books of various sizes, shapes and levels of difficulty. During the theme "New Beginnings" there is an abundance of books about insect, reptile, animal and human babies. Using a tape recorder and ear phones, the children may listen to stories prerecorded commercially or by the teacher, children or parent volunteers. The children may choose to read in an old bathtub, a beanbag chair, a sleeping bag or on the carpet. A bookrack donated by the local drugstore attractively displays the books. Children read alone, in pairs and in small groups. A parent has volunteered to assist work in the library center.

NEWSPAPER CENTER. The class newspaper is called "The Grizzly Gazette" and is published weekly. Ten to 12 strips of blank newsprint hang around the center, each representing a column for publication: Sports, Weather, Theme Study, U.S. News, World News, Math, Reading, Art, Science, Social Studies or Entertainment. Children select a column and write about what they are doing in that area or report what they know.

Each week an editor is selected. This child selects the columns for the week. The columns reflect the writing stages of the children from simple to sophisticated writing. The newspaper is read each week in class and is taken home to be shared with the family. Copies of the community newspaper, rulers, pencils, crayons and a picture dictionary can also be found in the newspaper center.

SCIENCE CENTER. Here the children can find equipment to help them do experiments: a magnifying glass, prisms, scales, a microscope, a bug catcher and a flashlight. They even find lab coats made from white shirts donated by fathers. Children locate and follow the directions from a task card. The tasks are generated by the children during theme study as they seek answers to questions they have asked. Today they are noting likenesses and differences among seeds, eggs and roots. The center is supplied with reference materials such as maps, globes, trade books and a set of encyclopedias.

These students are using magnifying glasses to learn more about pine cones and seeds.

PUBLISHING COMPANY. In the publishing company, called the "Panda Press," books are written, illustrated and published by children in the classroom. Children find materials necessary for publishing in this center: pieces of cardboard, construction paper, contact paper, glue, tape, staplers and rings for binding. Parents are recruited to help manage the daily operations of this center.

PROBLEM SOLVING/ECONOMICS. Using mathematical and problem-solving skills children add a different dimension to their theme study. For example, in the study of "New Beginnings," children may explore ways to begin a new business. Using the book, "How to Turn Lemons Into Money" by D. Armstrong, children read about the antics of an enterprising young lady and her lemonade stand. Children may prepare their own books or booklets using the same story form by changing the lemons to something else such as dough into bread or grapes into grape juice and then changing the finished product. These books may be taken to the Publishing Company for publication. Some children may decide to prepare a filmstrip instead of a book.

Other children may actually plan production of a product and develop a plan for employment, marketing, budget, credit and advertising.

VISUAL ARTS. The children find reprints of paintings by several well-known artists. During the theme, "New Beginnings" the reprints are those that represent animal and human babies.

Task Cards

The teacher has written tasks on 3 by 5 inch cards and placed them in a recipe file box for some of the centers. Higher levels of thinking are emphasized. Children use what they have learned and what they can do to complete these tasks. Some examples of tasks found in the Visual Arts center are:

1. Decide which painting you like best. Tell why.

Photo by Rick McComb

This student is working on a "task card" assignment.

2. Tell what you believe the artists were trying to express in their paintings. (Younger children may paint their own pictures and compare and contrast them with the artist's piece.)
3. Study the life of each painter. Tell briefly the people who influenced them the most and what was the result of this influence.

Lunch

Upon completion of center time, the children get ready for lunch. In the cafeteria the children are encouraged to have quiet conversations with classmates. Periodically, children are responsible for table decorations that reflect the themes and topics throughout the school. This week Mrs. Roberts' class made bird nests and filled them with paper eggs.

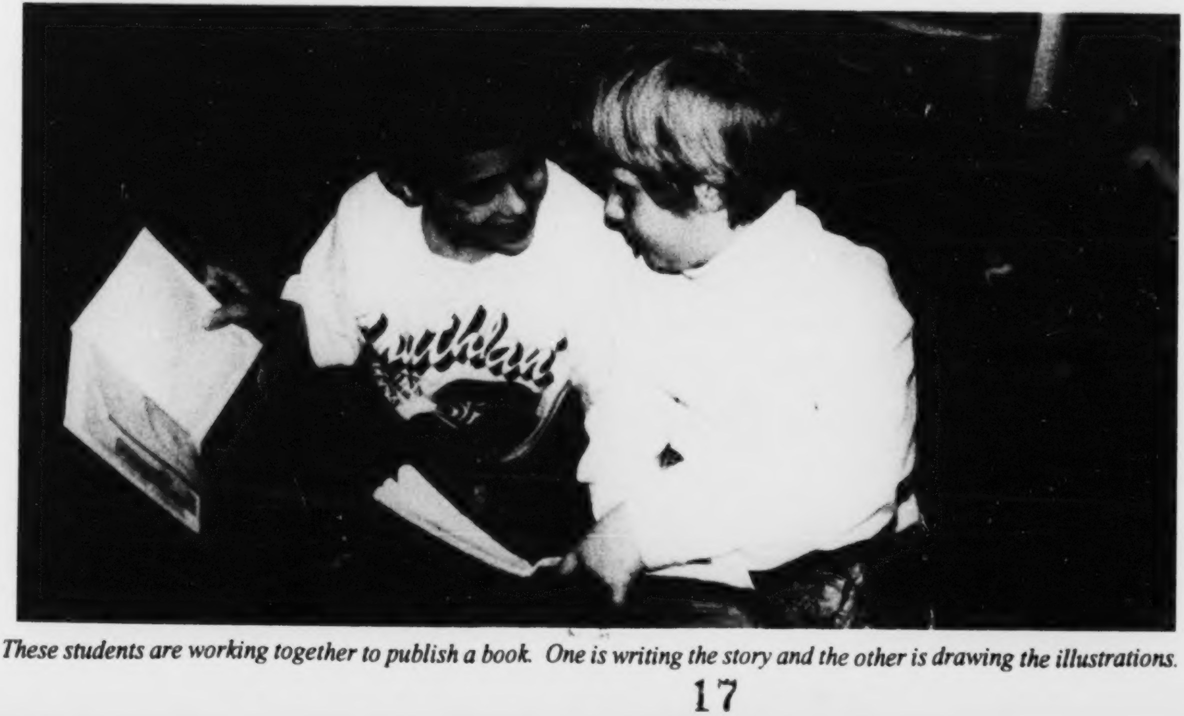
When the half-day children finish their lunch they are taken to the bus by a teacher aide; the rest of the children return to their room where they greet the afternoon half-day children.

'Specials'

While Mrs. Roberts conducts calendar activities with the half-day children, the full-day children read silently and react to their book in a reading log. The full-day children go to "specials" (art, music, library, physical education) while the half-day children have a shared reading with Mrs. Roberts.

Time is devoted to an in-depth study of the theme "New Beginnings" during the afternoon. Whole group discussions, brainstorming and sharing take place in the large group. Later the children work in small cooperative groups or with a buddy to complete tasks and assignments and to solve problems. Some children may work on individual projects or they may spend time completing their assigned tasks (contracts).

Now it's time to go home. The children check their mailboxes one last time for notes and papers. Amanda's grandmother appears at the door to take her home. Today Amanda has a curious package -- it is her turn to "check out" the pet bunny for the weekend!



These students are working together to publish a book. One is writing the story and the other is drawing the illustrations.

Chapter 2

HOW DO YOUNG CHILDREN LEARN?

HOW WILL INSTRUCTION BE DIFFERENT?

Photo by Photography, Unlimited

Developmentally Appropriate Practices

DEVELOPMENTALLY APPROPRIATE PRACTICES

HOW DO YOUNG CHILDREN LEARN?

Planning school experiences around the needs of young children means that teachers and other adults in the school can free themselves from old habits of traditional schooling such as curricula that follow one textbook and excessive amounts of memorization. Teachers can use hands-on learning, play and exploration that are more suitable or "developmentally appropriate" for 5 to 9-year-old children. Most importantly, this approach encourages success in learning and avoids the stigma of failure for children.

Primary school implementation is guided by state regulations which include the following principles for how young children learn.

Photo by Rick McComb

Children are eager learners when they develop a sense of self-confidence.

(a) Young children learn at different rates and through different styles.

(b) Young children learn as they develop a sense of self-confidence in a positive learning environment.

(c) Young children learn best with "hands-on" experiences where they are encouraged to question, explore and discover.

(d) Young children learn best through an integrated curriculum by engaging in real-life activities and learning centers.

(e) Young children learn best in a social environment where they can converse with others to expand their language and their thinking.

Source: 704 KAR 3:440 Section 4.(2)

In other words:

- Children will make better progress when they experience success and not failure.

Young children learn best in a social environment where they can talk with others to expand their language skills.

Children take a "story walk," stopping to read their own work and the stories written by their classmates.

- Children will spend time on information they need to learn. They will progress at their own rate. They will not be pushed ahead so quickly that they miss skills and they will not be held back if they are ready to move ahead.

- Children will be in child-centered classrooms with children of other ages. Each student is viewed as an individual learner who will grow and develop in his or her own way socially, emotionally, intellectually, physically and creatively. There are no assumptions that all 5-year-old children are the same because they are 5. They are seen as individuals. Because children are different, classrooms will be different.

Developmental Phases of Learning

Classroom activities are organized around developmental phases of learning. This means that children grow at their own rates and in their own ways but they usually go through certain phases in learning. Educators recognize that these phases are not based only on age. They reflect the individuality, differing characteristics and needs of the children. Teachers assess the developmental phases of their children to determine what type of instruction is best for each child.

Early Learners

At the early learning phase (ages 4 to 6, approximately), children are expected to develop independence, to work and play cooperatively with others, to work productively with materials and ideas and to relate appropriately to adults. Reading and other academic subjects are taught at this phase when it is appropriate. When children are comfortable with themselves as persons separate from adults, when they can interact productively with other children, when they can work comfortably with materials and ideas with a minimum of frustration or tension, and when they can look to adults for support and guidance but not for constant direction, then they are ready to progress to a more academic phase of learning.

Photo by Rick McComb

Primary children proudly share their accomplishments.

Emerging Learners

As emerging learners (ages 5 to 8, approximately), children begin to develop the academic tools necessary for future learning. Reading, writing, computation, problem solving and effective communication are examples of learning outcomes for these children.

Proficient Learners

As more proficient learners (ages 7 to 10, approximately), children are able to evaluate themselves and identify their strengths and weaknesses. They develop their own ways to build on strengths, improve in areas of need and increase their motivation for learning to become self-directed learners.

Success Builds Success

Throughout all developmental phases, children become more interested in learning when they can build success upon success. Teachers clearly communicate learning successes to each child. Learning goals are reached in steps. There is a sense of accomplishment through the continuous process of reaching goals and defining new goals. When children master one learning goal, they feel successful and then can set new goals and move ahead.

Teachers continuously assess students in order to make the best instructional decisions based on the characteristics and needs of each child. Then teachers determine the most effective teaching and learning styles and the kind of peer group that will contribute to each child's learning.

Kentucky's Teachers Are Making The Shift...

From LESS Effective Instruction That:	To MORE Effective Instruction That:
Views students as passive recipients of knowledge and skill; spoon-fed by teachers	Sees students as active creators of meaning and learning stimulated by teachers, parents, the community, media and others
Involves high expectations for SOME students	Involves high expectations for ALL students
Is based upon an assortment of curriculum objectives	Is focused on outcomes
Limits writing instruction to language arts or English classes	Integrates writing into every area of the curriculum
Limits students' writing to low-level tasks; papers are graded only for corrections	Includes a writing program that focuses on all of the stages of the writing process; students receive rich feedback and have opportunities for revision
Views basic communication and math skills as the sole responsibility of the language arts, English or mathematics teacher	Encourages students to become proficient at using reading, writing, mathematics and the other basic skills in all areas of the curriculum
Is focused on recall of facts and rote learning	Is focused on the ability to apply what has been learned to real-life problems
Relies on the teacher as the source of all answers	Encourages student inquiry and exploration
Limits students to reading textbooks and answering low-level questions	Involves students in hands-on investigations and interpretive discussions
Utilizes single textbooks, dittos and worksheets	Utilizes a variety of materials, including real books, technology and an abundance of resource materials
Groups students based on skill ability	Groups students flexibly based on interests, work habits, learning needs or the nature of the task
Is focused on isolated skills in a rigid sequence	Is focused on concepts, important skills in real life contexts, processes and attitudes
Is focused on narrow content area	Integrates or correlates content areas when appropriate
Isolates students or places them in competition with one another	Involves students in collaborative learning

Adapted from "Ed News," Special Section, August 1992

HOW WILL INSTRUCTION CHANGE?

Moving toward developmentally appropriate practices requires that teachers shift their understandings about how young children learn and the type of environment in which this can best occur. As developmentally appropriate primary programs evolve over time you can expect to see many of the following differences and changes.

Flexible grouping and regrouping of children of different age, sex and ability. Flexible grouping enables children to advance at their own pace; to tutor others or be tutored; and to interact with children of different ages, personalities, backgrounds, interests and abilities. Children are provided experiences of being the oldest, youngest, one of the fastest, one of the slowest, being with friends and separated from friends as they

Small groups of students work together on projects.

progress through the primary program. These groupings reflect the realities of daily living. Children may be grouped for some activities by developmental phase, while for others they may be grouped by skill level. At other times children may be working with peers that share the same interests, learning styles or problem-solving techniques. Children may be placed in cooperative learning groups or may even be randomly selected for a group. Types of grouping include:

1. **Skill or instructional needs groups** - Children are instructed in a particular skill. In language or mathematics, for example, extra instruction in consonant blends or in multiplication may be provided.
2. **Problem-solving groups** - Children are grouped around a common unsolved problem or topic; for example, an investigation of various types of water soluble materials.
3. **Interest groups** - Some children may pursue a topic in depth such as erosion around Kentucky lakes while other children may wish to study pollution in Kentucky. Others may wish to read Kentucky folk tales aloud.
4. **Learning-style groups** - Children who share a particular learning style may work together; for example, those that prefer an auditory mode may listen to a pre-recorded story.
5. **Reinforcement groups** - Children may receive additional instruction in a specific area or task. For example, some children may need more work on multiplication tables.
6. **Peer tutoring** - Children can learn from one another by giving and receiving help; for example, older and younger children are paired to read to one another.

Photo by Rick McComb

Students help other students in primary classrooms.

7. **Cooperative learning groups** - Children can participate in the completion of a clearly assigned task without direct supervision of the teacher. This requires that children be trained in cooperative work behaviors and that the teacher carefully plans and evaluates the group work.

Traditionally, teachers have grouped children by achievement levels and perceived ability. However, the results of recent research indicates that this practice does not provide a quality and equitable education for all children and that there may be a link between children's low achievement and how they have been grouped. Flexible grouping allows teachers to cluster children in ways that improve both learning and the social-emotional growth of children. Teachers are able to use grouping patterns which promote academic achievement and encourage excellence for all children.

Integrated curriculum means that teachers deliberately bring together the full range of subjects in the school's curriculum: language arts, math, science, social studies, the arts, music and physical education. Instructional activities are based primarily on themes, topics, units, or problems generated from the child's world. Teachers use these themes to help students meet the learning goals in all areas. Large blocks of time are structured around what children need to know in these areas. The emphasis is on a natural approach that focuses the curriculum on the children's questions and interests rather than on content determined by the state, school or textbooks. Motivation is increased because the areas of study are related directly to the children's lives and interests.

This colorful door greets children studying a thematic unit on climate areas of the world.

Teachers consider the natural aspects of children's lives when organizing an integrated curriculum. They use the personal and social needs of the children to determine what kind of experiences to provide. The interests, abilities and developmental needs of the children determine when particular experiences are provided. The learning outcomes of the curriculum provide a framework for what concepts and skills to teach. Finally, the nature of the community tells teachers why certain activities are necessary.

Once a theme, topic, unit or problem has been identified, every aspect of the curriculum is organized around it, as much as possible. For example, during a theme study on "Living Things" children may read many books related to the topic, practice language skills as they read, and write about or draw pictures about what they learn. They may measure and graph their knowledge using math and science skills. Social studies concepts using history and geography may be linked together. The class may take a field trip to a nearby farm or zoo to gain additional real-life information while simultaneously practicing social skills.

Balanced teacher-directed and child-initiated activities means that the role of the teacher often becomes one of a facilitator or guide of learning rather than only a deliverer of information; the teacher becomes a change agent. The role of the child becomes one of self initiation and direction rather than one of a passive recipient of knowledge. For example, a child brings an arrowhead to school that was found on a farm. The teacher facilitates a discussion whereby students ask questions such as: What was this arrowhead used for? How was it made? When was it used and by whom? A few students may be interested in learning more about the Indians that lived on the farm years ago. They may form a group to further investigate this topic and build a model Indian village to reflect the way Indians lived. Several group members may compare Indian farming practices to current farming practices in Kentucky. At other times teachers will direct the learning.

> We are using lots of different ways to teach children in order to reach them on their level.
>
> Jane Perry
> primary teacher

Photo by Rick McComb

Teachers provide direction and suggestions for primary students.

Varied instructional strategies and approaches means that the teacher uses a variety of teaching methods and approaches to support and enhance the learning of young children. Some examples include whole language, process writing, "hands-on" science, manipulative math, cooperative learning, peer tutoring, themes, topics and units of instruction, projects, learning centers, independent learning activities and others.

Whole language is a term used to describe an approach to learning that is based on the natural way young children learn to read and write. Children become proficient readers and language users by reading and using language for real and functional purposes related to their own experiences, interests and phases of learning development. Because learning oral language (speaking and listening) and written language (reading and writing) are so closely related, the instructional program carefully integrates both processes. Language is taught as a whole, not by fragmented skills. More specifically, children are not drilled on abstract bits of language (isolated letters, sounds, syllables, words); rather, the aim is to develop the four aspects of language (speaking, listening, writing and reading) so that children learn to communicate effectively and think creatively. Because of the close relationship between thought and language, the activities are designed so that they build and expand upon basic concepts:

- Children learn language by using language; that is, they learn to read and write by reading, writing and speaking about their experiences.

- Language is learned from whole to part. Language is more than a series of words strung together. Children may understand what a sentence means before they know what the individual words are.

- The language components of reading, writing, speaking and listening are taught as interrelated and interdependent processes.

- Children come to school with a knowledge of their world and of oral and written language on which further reading and language arts instruction is based.

- Language arts is integrated with the other areas of the curriculum.

- Children are provided with an environment that is rich in opportunities to use language for a variety of real communication purposes.

Children at all phases of developmental learning are involved in many different kinds of reading experiences daily. Some of these involve the whole class in sharing a selection from literature, trade books, or an assortment of other sources. Flexible reading groups (for example, cooperative groups, instructional needs groups for skill lessons, research groups, interest groups and problem-solving groups) may be formed according to the purpose of instruction. Children also have access to material which they can read independently.

Quality children's literature is the core of whole language and can be used as a foundation oflearning. Good literature books capture children's interests and information is rapidly absorbed from them. Teachers select books that support instructional themes, topics and units. Children's literature is used to present skills, facts and concepts in a way that is motivating and understandable to children. A variety of material is used such as language experience stories, picture books, "big books", traditional literature, fantasy and science fiction, realistic and historical fiction, mystery, drama, biography, poetry, newspapers, magazines, children's own stories and books, as well as a children's literature anthology.

Children enjoy reading "big books."

Reading is a process that enables children to make sense of print. When children read, they use what they already know combined with the print they see, to make sense of what they read. Children enter school with different knowledge about reading and with different reading abilities. Teachers identify what children already know and guide reading experiences to build on that knowledge. Teachers also recognize that reading is developmental and plan activities that match that stage of development.

Children who are early readers:

- Come to understand the concept of print; for example, reading from left to right, format of a book and the notion that the print rather than the picture tells the story.
- Can tell a story from pictures.
- Like listening to stories, handling books, talking about pictures, telling the story in their own words, singing songs and jingles, using finger play and puppets, acting out stories and telling their own stories.

Children who are emerging readers:

- Join in oral reading of familiar and predictable stories.
- Reread some of their own written language.
- Are able to decode some words which are in their oral vocabulary but which they have not previously seen in print by using contextual clues such as beginning letters, reading on, rereading and using pictures.
- Begin to self correct when reading does not make sense.
- Retell a story with a fair approximation of sequence.
- Refer to letters of the alphabet by name.
- Are able to hear sounds within words; for example, "Tell me a word that starts with the same sound."

As children become more accomplished readers they move from being dependent on predictable materials and teacher support to showing independence as readers.

More proficient readers:

- Are able to predict possible story lines.
- Begin to check out their predictions about a story by referring to text.
- Increasingly use phonics when encountering unfamiliar words.
- Self-correct when what they read does not make sense.
- Read, with understanding, simple stories, rhymes and passages of information, to themselves and aloud.
- Use books as sources of information to support aspects of their work in the classroom.

Primary students read real books often called "trade books."

As children develop and become more able readers, they are able to:

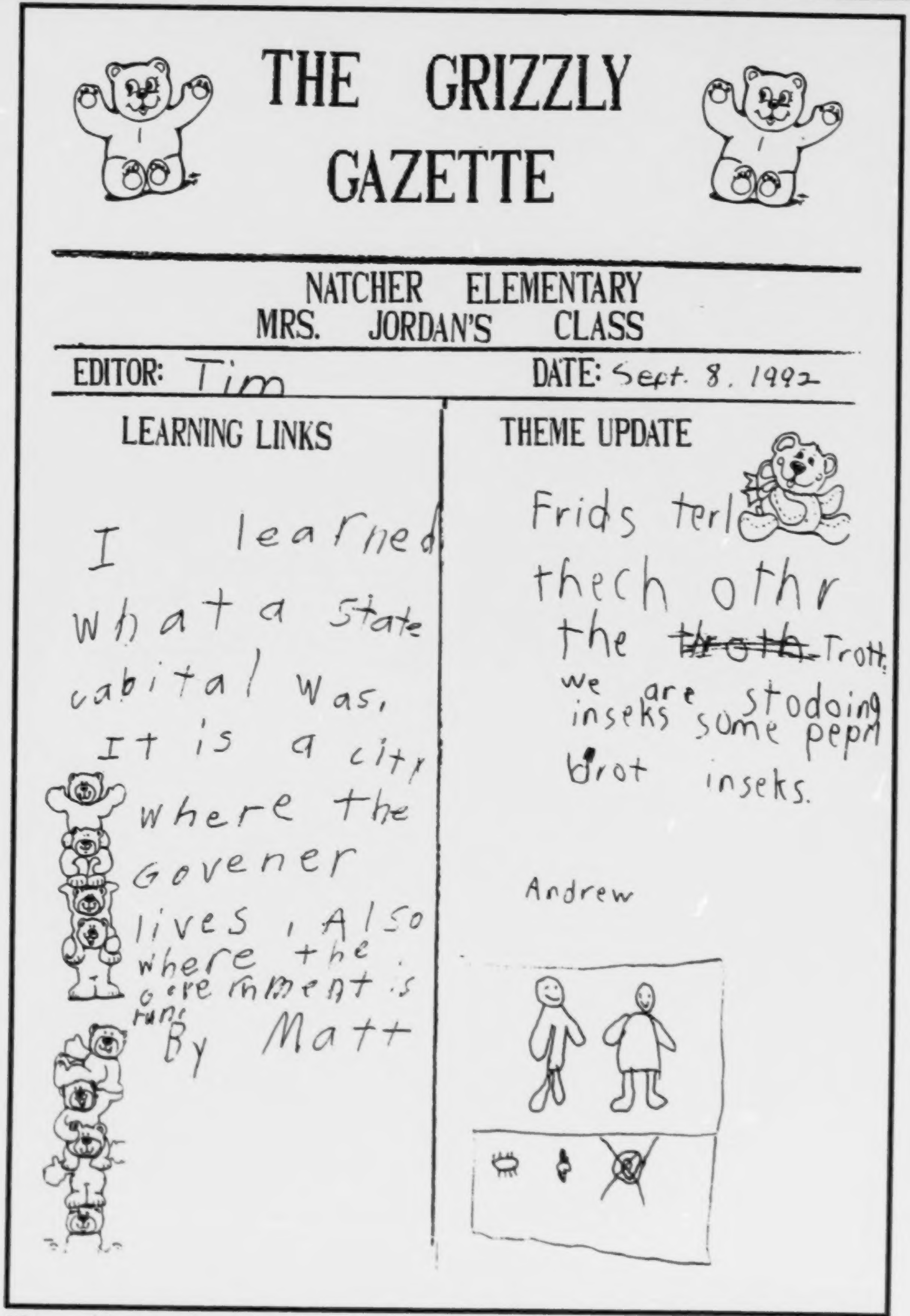
- Use a variety of phonics and structural word skills to establish word meaning.
- Select, interpret and put in order evidence gathered through reading and apply it to a particular question.
- Read aloud prose and verse so as to communicate the meaning of the text effectively.
- Read critically, distinguishing fact from opinion.
- Use the text to draw inferences, make predictions and form judgements.
- Use a dictionary, an index and general reference books (encyclopedias, atlases) and other informational documents such as timetables, catalogues and brochures.
- Interpret non-verbal information, such as maps, signs and symbols associated with the texts read.
- Develop an understanding of elements of a story, including genre, plot, character, setting and climax.
- Read from a variety of sources out of general interest to broaden understanding of self and others.

Process writing is another instructional strategy that is used in combination with whole language. Teachers recognize that writing is a process and that children learn to write by writing. Therefore, writing activities take place every day in the primary program. Some of these activities are brief, such as captions for pictures, bulletin board titles and subtitles, personal lists of things to be done and informal notes. Other activities, such as stories, poems, reports and letters, are more involved and may continue for a number of days. Every day, however, each child does some writing. Writing is a complex process involving thinking processes, composing processes and mechanical skills. Teachers teach these skills and processes through an integrated approach and not as isolated skills.

Photo by Rick McComb

Children learn to write by writing every day.

Process writing has five steps that occur in this order: pre-writing, drafting, revising, editing and publishing. Pre-writing occurs before children begin to write. It is during this step that ideas are generated.



THE GRIZZLY
GAZETTE

NATCHER ELEMENTARY
MRS. JORDAN'S CLASS

EDITOR: Tim
DATE: Sept. 8, 1992

LEARNING LINKS

I learned what a State cabital was. It is a city where the Govener lives, Also where the government is runs

By Matt

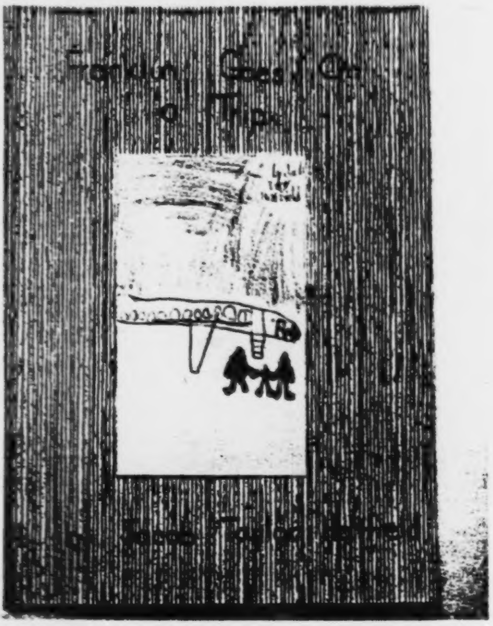
THEME UPDATE

Frids terl thech othr the ~~throth~~ Trott. we are stodoing inseks some pepn brot inseks.

Andrew

This weekly newspaper is produced by the children and taken home each week to share with families. Young children use "invented" spelling at first. Conventional spelling and punctuation follow. These two "reporters" are at different learning levels. Andrew's report is on the class theme. "Friends tell each other the truth. We are studying insects. Some people brought insects."

Children think about what they want to say in their writing. They often talk with others about the topic. Sometimes further information is needed and the topic is researched.



Primary students publish their books in the final step of process writing.

Next, during the drafting step, children begin to put words on the paper. These words begin to form the children's initial thoughts, allowing their ideas to flow without concern for spelling, grammar, punctuation or handwriting. Children concentrate on getting the message down so that it says what they intend for it to say. If they are unsure of the spelling of a word, they "invent" it for the time being.

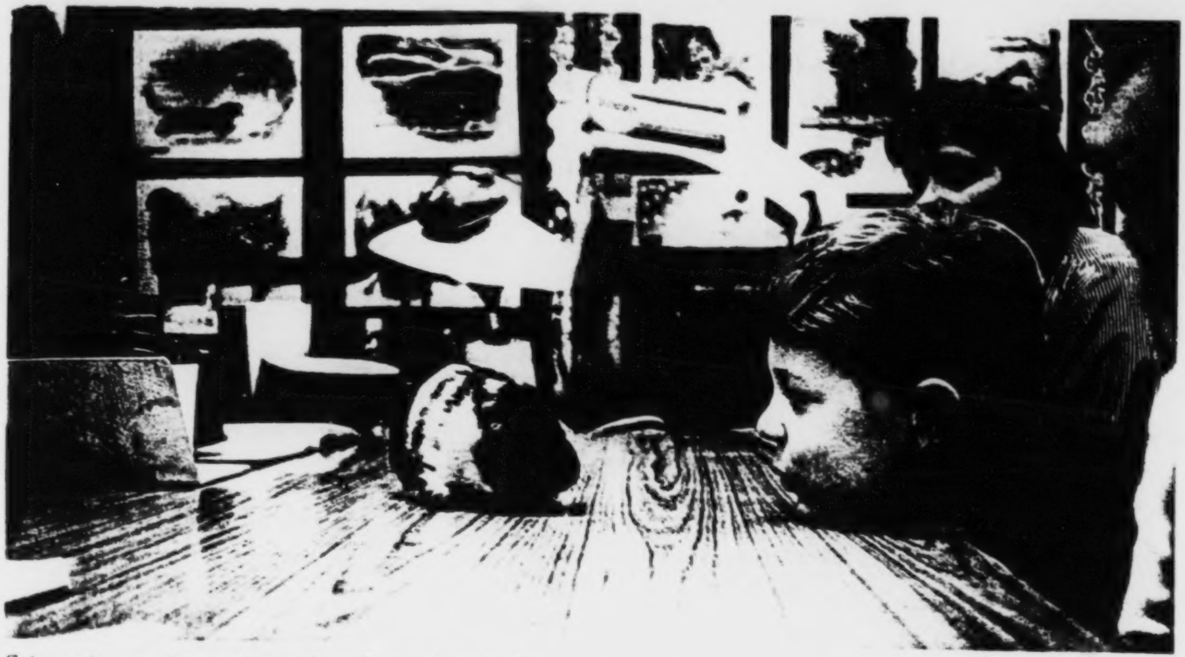
> It is incredible what primary children can do. We just have to believe that they can and encourage the children to reach new heights.
>
> Anissa Hendrick
> primary teacher

The third step is revising. During this step, children read and reread their work. They may change the words, move sentences around and add new information. They may ask a friend to read it to be sure the meaning is clear.

The fourth step is to edit the piece by making changes in punctuation, spelling, capitalization and sentence structure. Sometimes children may ask another child or the teacher to help edit.

The last step is publishing, making the writing ready to be read by the intended audience. The final form may be hung in the hallway, bound in a book or booklet, or mailed as a letter.

Invented spelling, an important component of process writing, is often misunderstood by those who have been previously taught to use conventional spelling. Purposeful writing and invented spelling are complementary ways to promote children's learning. When young children begin to write they use invented spelling, often called "best guess" or "kid spelling," by employing the names of letters to construct written representations of words. For example, a child may write "BKZ" for "because." In this example, spelling is constructed from the letter names associated with consonant sounds in the word. When children begin to invent spellings, they find it easier to write. When writing for a purpose (that is, for an audience other than the teacher) children learn more about spelling. As children invent spellings they are engaged in thought about spelling. Purposeful writing unlocks children's thinking about spelling by engaging them in the process. When children learn to speak they move from babbling to first words to two-word utterances and later to mature speech. Spelling follows a similar pattern, moving from scribbling to using random letters to using only consonants to phonetic spelling to conven-



Science is more interesting with real animals to study.

tional spelling. Thus, children learn how to spell inventing spellings and refining their understanding of print. The process involves active participation and risk-taking.

Another instructional strategy is **"hands-on" science**. It must be seen as part of their own personal world if it is to be understood and remembered. Through experimentation and hands-on learning experiences children are able to play, explore, create and use their critical thinking skills. Children are introduced to techniques that are common to all scientific investigation through collecting data, making observations, analyzing data and determining why certain things happen under different circumstances. Gradually they begin to assume the role of a scientist and begin thinking as one would.

Science is not taught as a separate subject. It is integrated throughout the day as children explore a broad-based theme, topic, unit, problem, or piece of literature. Hands-on science instruction may even occur on the playground, field trips, or walks around the school. The exploration of science reflects the belief that understanding is at the heart of effective learning, not merely recitation from a textbook.

Manipulative math is an important component of the curriculum. The underlying assumption of manipulative math is that "children learn by doing." When children are actively engaged in their own learning they enjoy the learning process. Math is presented as an extension of experiences children encounter in their development, both at their real-life and make-believe levels. Children are led through sequences of problem-solving experiences presented through games and stories. The teacher asks questions rather than telling information, guides children's thinking instead of giving them direction to follow as they use textbooks and work sheets.

Language is a necessary tool for learning mathematical concepts and skills. Children who can talk about, illustrate and dramatize story problems that represent mathematical thinking and those who can explain to others how they solved a problem demonstrate their thorough understanding of mathematics. Content and skills are integrated within a broad theme and are not taught separately.

Teachers provide activities in which math content and skills are sequenced so that the work is continually challenging. Math concepts are integrated throughout the day: during calendar time, during learning center activities and during whole language instruction. Flexible grouping and regrouping enables the teacher to provide individualized instruction based on each child's need for reinforcement, remediation or enrichment.

Cooperative learning takes place when small groups of children work together for specific purposes. Cooperative groups are used to teach concepts, to promote creative problem-solving and to increase oral language skills. Socially, the use of group work improves interpersonal relations by increasing trust and friendliness. Children learn skills working in groups that can be transferred to many real world situations.

Photo by Rick McComb

Children often work together cooperatively in primary classrooms.

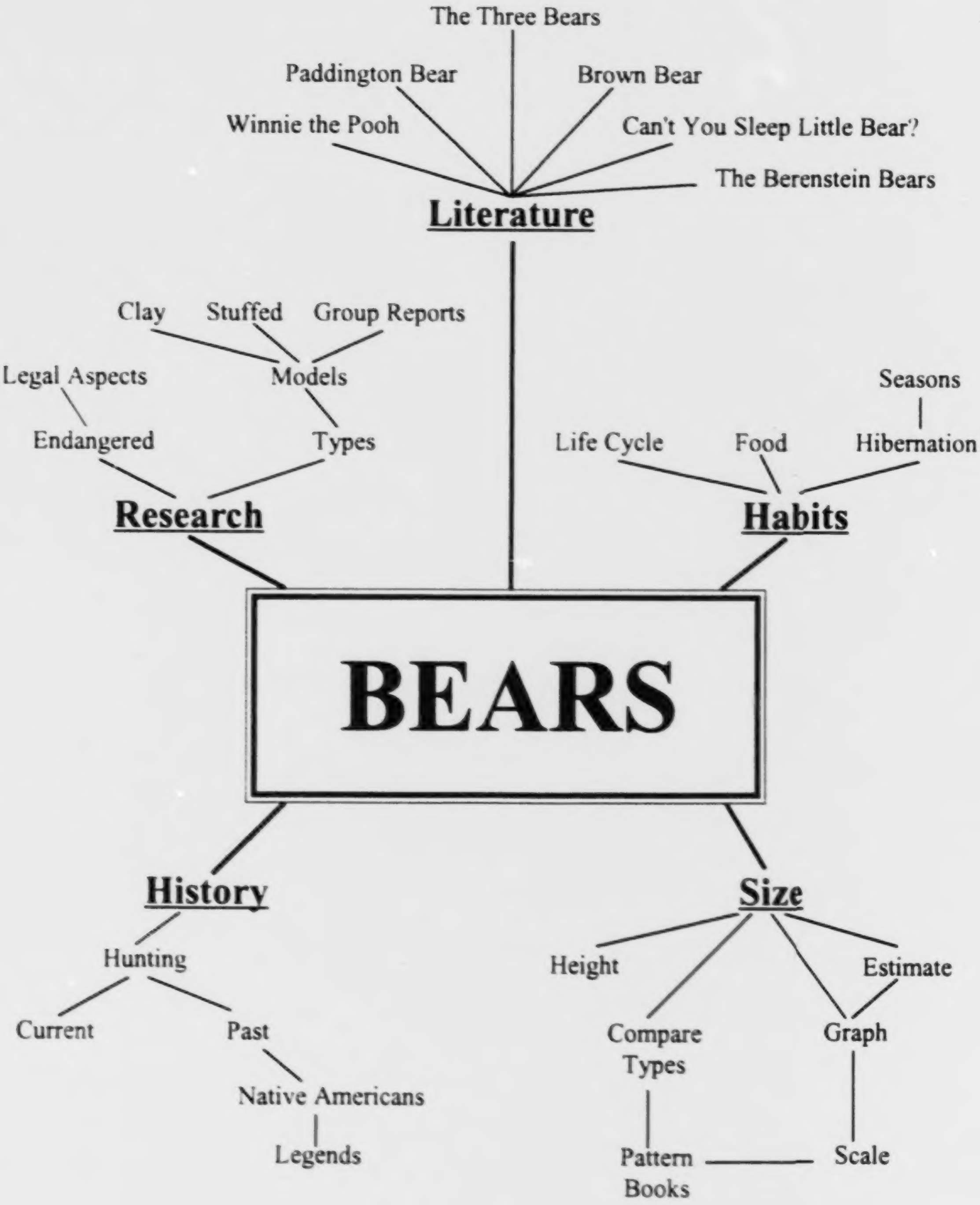
This small group is working together in a "hands on" math project.

Cooperative grouping is well suited for use in multiage classrooms where there is a range of student skills. Teaching objectives direct the choice of cooperative learning groups. Groups should be small enough so that everyone can participate. Independence is encouraged as children within a group learn to work without continuous direct supervision of the teacher.

When children are given a group task, even if they make mistakes, they have control over their work. Children are free to complete the task as they think best, remaining accountable to the teacher and classmates for the final product.

Group members must use their communication skills (reading, writing, speaking and listening) when deciding how to get the job done and who is to be responsible for each part of the task. As they communicate with each other about the task, they ask questions, explain procedures, make suggestions and develop a plan. They listen to members of the group, agree and disagree with their ideas and make joint decisions.

Children enjoy the active participation of working together. Group members respond to classmates' comments and suggestions. Children enjoy helping others and respond to help offered by group members.


The Three Bears
Paddington Bear
Brown Bear
Winnie the Pooh
Can't You Sleep Little Bear?
The Berenstein Bears
Literature
Clay
Stuffed
Group Reports
Legal Aspects
Models
Seasons
Endangered
Types
Life Cycle
Food
Hibernation
Research
Habits
BEARS
History
Size
Hunting
Height
Estimate
Current
Past
Compare Types
Graph
Native Americans
Legends
Pattern Books
Scale

Children must be taught how to work in cooperative group situations. Their ability to work constructively must be developed. Many children have not had previous experiences with cooperative tasks; therefore, they may need support as they improve group skills. Appropriate group behaviors are usually developed through exercises and games. For example, responding to the needs of the group is a skill required for any kind of cooperative task. This skill is reinforced with a group exercise called Broken Circles in which children must be willing to give away their pieces of a puzzle in order to be able to complete a picture.

Peer tutoring takes place in any situation where one child helps another learn. Children can learn significantly from other children. They can also learn by helping others. This interaction can happen spontaneously or become a part of the daily lesson plan. Peer tutoring can occur between children of the same age or different ages.

These students are reading their writing projects to one another and making suggestions for improvement.

A paired reading technique, sometimes called "buddy reading" is a form of peer tutoring. Two children who have the same or different reading abilities are paired by the teacher. A more proficient reader may read a book aloud while a less proficient reader follows along visually, or the two children may take turns reading aloud. Frequently, two children choose to "pair up" to read a book simply for enjoyment.

When children don't know how to spell a word and have tried several sources, they will often ask a peer for help. Children are encouraged to use collaboration with peers as an important learning strategy.

Thematic instruction is the use of themes, topics and units that interest young children and provide a way to organize daily activities. Children are motivated to learn when they have an interest in what they are studying.

Themes have a wide range of focus areas that appeal to most individual interests. Examples of broad-based themes include patterns, change and interdependence. **Topics** are generated from themes. For example, a topic that could be explored within a theme entitled "Living Things" would be "Mammals." **Units** narrow the focus even more, creating opportunities to explore ideas, interests, concerns or questions children may have about a subject. The interest of individual children could lead to a unit call "Bears."

Mapping, sometimes called webbing, is a strategy used to organize thoughts about a theme, topic, or unit. The example on the previous page shows how a unit on bears could be organized.

Teachers begin the organization of a theme, topic, or unit by using a process called "KWL" (know, wonder, learn). For example, in planning a unit called "Bears", a teacher may ask children to tell what they already know about bears. As children share what they know, the teacher writes the information on a large chart. Next, the teacher may ask children what they want to know or wonder about bears. The teacher again records their responses on a large chart. The things that children wonder about form the basis of learning. Children then group themselves according to a question each wishes to pursue and investigations begin with the children doing the thinking and researching while the teacher acts as a facilitator or guide. The children, working in groups and helping each other, decide how they will conduct their investigations. They also decide upon a product that will reflect what they have learned. This product can be used to assess learning which has taken place. As the children work, the teacher guides their efforts through questions and comments, always providing encouragement. At the conclusion of the project the teacher may record what the children have learned on a large chart.

> Effective learning centers allow children to... experiment, experience, question, discuss and reflect, thus participating in the process of discovery learning, the process of learning how to learn.
>
> Susan Schwartz, Mindy Pollishuke
> *Creating the Child Centered Classroom*

Projects in the primary classroom help children process information. Appropriate projects offer children opportunities to understand and use information effectively. Children usually begin a project by asking, "What do I want to find out?" Next, they ask, "Where can I find information about my topic?" Third, children determine how they might record the information and organize it in a purposeful way. To be meaningful, the projects are then presented to appropriate audiences. Finally, the projects are evaluated by the presenters, their peers and the teacher.

Learning centers are instructional areas in a classroom. These areas are designed to develop specific learning outcomes. Activities must be suitable for children with varying educational and developmental needs. Centers provide opportunities for children to learn from each other and to interact with materials. Centers can be of two kinds. One is a permanent center, sometimes called a work station, in which the materials are changed according to themes, topics or units, for example a library, publishing company or post office. A second type of center is a temporary one that is designed to support a specific concept or skill, usually related to a theme, topic or unit such as, "Bears," "Insects," or "Dinosaurs." Several curriculum areas, (reading, writing, art, mathematics, social studies, science and music) may be integrated in the center.

Centers are limited only by the imaginations of teachers and children. Centers include activities that develop researching, problem solving and thinking skills. They also encourage creativity. Time for work at centers is scheduled so that all children have the opportunity to complete one or more activities. Sometimes children may choose activities and sometimes they follow a schedule or contract set by the teacher.

Assessment is a critical part of center work. Children create and exhibit products as a result of center work and these projects can be evaluated. Examples of products include written and oral presentations, drawings, role play or puppets, diaries and work logs, charts and graphs. Teachers assess academic progress, work habits, group interaction, time management and commitment to task. Assessment also includes group and peer evaluation as well as individual student self-evaluation.

The following list includes examples of centers often found in primary programs.

A **Construction Center** contains a wide variety of building materials including blocks and block-building accessories of varying types and sizes to encourage children to manipulate, create, design and build.

A **Library Center** offers a wide variety of books and tapes. This center has many interesting books and a comfortable place to read and listen to stories, books and poems.

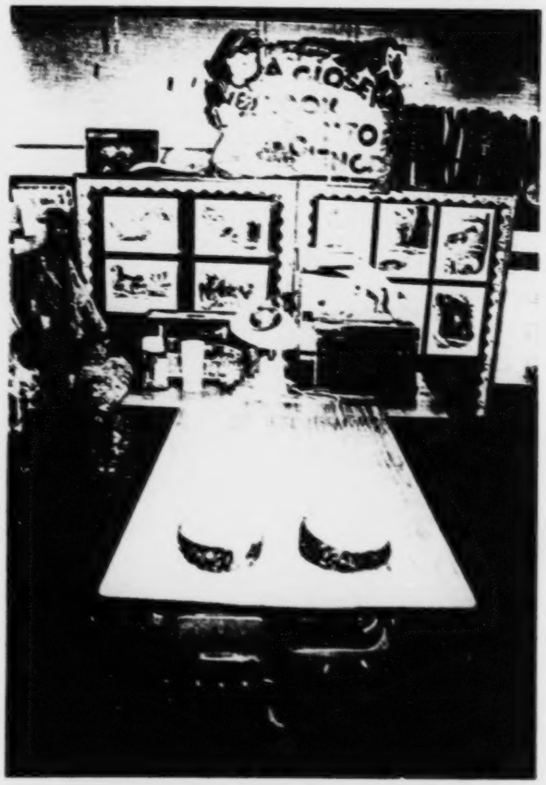
A **Listening Center** contains a record player, tape players, earphones and a variety of records and tapes of stories or music.

An **Art Center** includes materials such as paint, crayons, clay, chalk and paper, which invite children to creatively express their feelings and impressions of the world around them or the "worlds" they are studying.

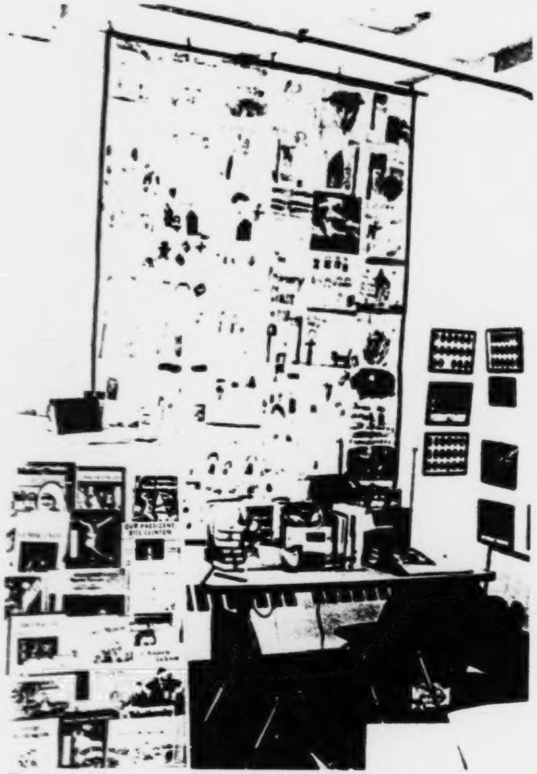
A **Writing Center** contains a variety of paper and writing instruments, journals, picture files identified by name, letter stamps, a typewriter and/or computer with printer.

A **Dramatics Center** is an area which changes frequently to provide settings such as a house, a supermarket, a shop, or a business. Puppets and role playing costumes are also available for use by children.

A **Multi-sensory Center** offers a variety of manipulatives and activities to promote listening, visual and auditory discrimination and eye-hand coordination. Sand and water tables, as well as woodworking activities, are often included.



An **Exploration and Science Center** offers activities that are related to the biological, physical and earth sciences. Children can observe, classify, predict and report information about a variety of science experiences.



Students have made a class quilt for the quiet time center.

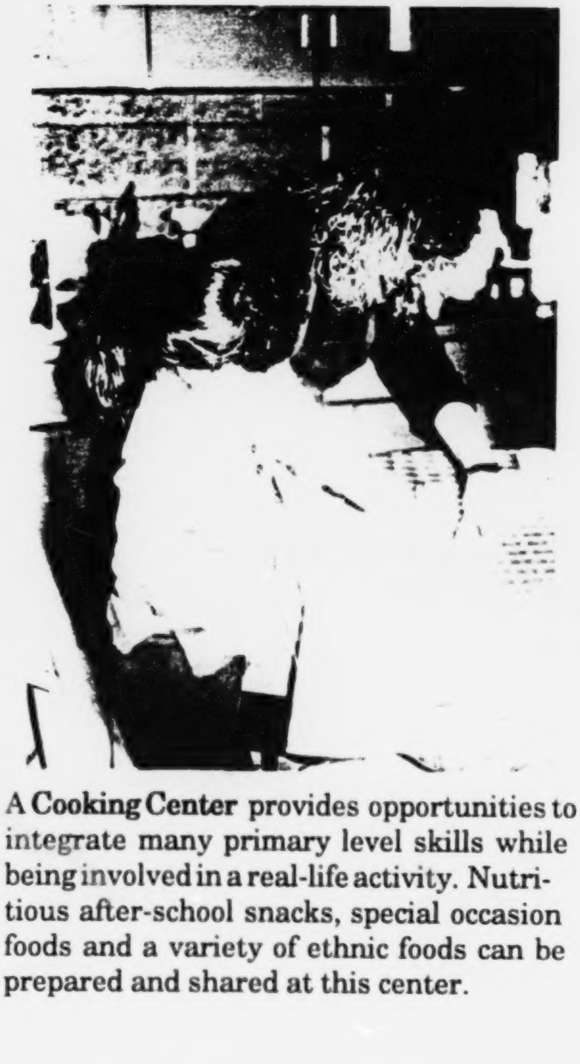
A **Quiet Time Center** provides a comfortable, quiet place where a child can be alone and not be disturbed.

A **Music Center** offers different types of musical instruments and materials to make homemade instruments, along with opportunities to create and practice original compositions.

A **Gross Motor Development Center** includes large indoor or outdoor areas for activities such as climbing, running, jumping, balancing, dramatic play and large constructions.

A **Game Center** contains a variety of games such as Chess, Scrabble, Bingo, strategy games and skill reinforcement games made by teachers, students and parents.

A **Mathematics Center** offers a variety of manipulative and problem-solving tasks to promote the use of mathematical applications.



A **Cooking Center** provides opportunities to integrate many primary level skills while being involved in a real-life activity. Nutritious after-school snacks, special occasion foods and a variety of ethnic foods can be prepared and shared at this center.

A Computer/Technology Center includes one or more computers, software and a printer to allow children opportunities to become familiar with computers. (From: Moving Toward A Primary Program: A Self-Study ,The Kentucky Department of Education)

Independent learning activities are those that are totally or partly under the control of the learner. They are designed to meet the individual needs of children in a classroom setting characterized by multiple levels of achievement, ability, ages and social and physical development.

Children who engage in independent learning activities assume responsibility for their own learning and behavior through the choices they make and their interest in a project keeps them involved. Independent learners are those who are self-starters -- they are self-directed and persistent. They tend to view problems as challenges, not obstacles, and they develop self-discipline. These children are able to use basic study skills, organize their time and develop a plan for completing work. A goal of the primary classroom is to achieve independence in all learners.

As children participate in independent learning activities, the teacher structures the activities so that they are challenging but not frustrating. Expectations are clearly stated. The activities are designed to reinforce skills already mastered while encouraging the learners to attempt new, more advanced skills.

In this primary classroom there is a drama center on the far left, a social studies center in the middle and a science center on the right.

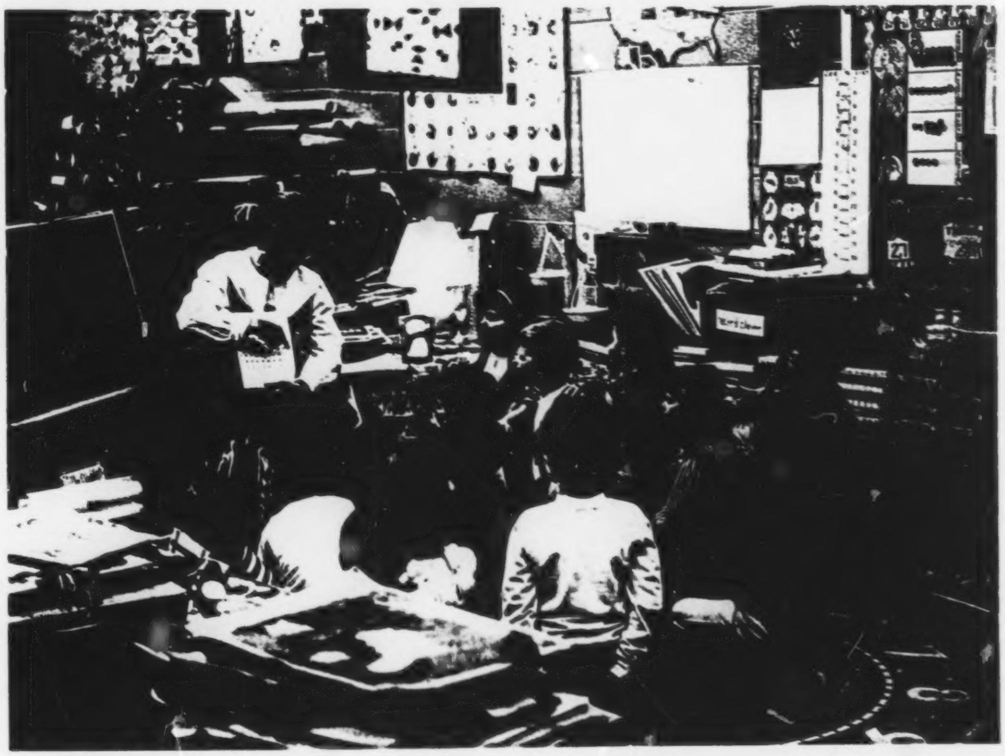
Photo by Rick McComb

The mediocre teacher tells, the good one explains, the great one inspires.

anonymous

Chapter 3

HOW IS THE PRIMARY CLASSROOM DIFFERENT?

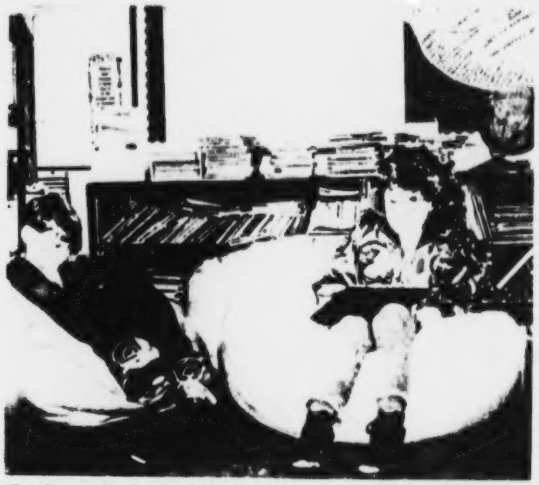


Characteristics of a Quality Learning Environment

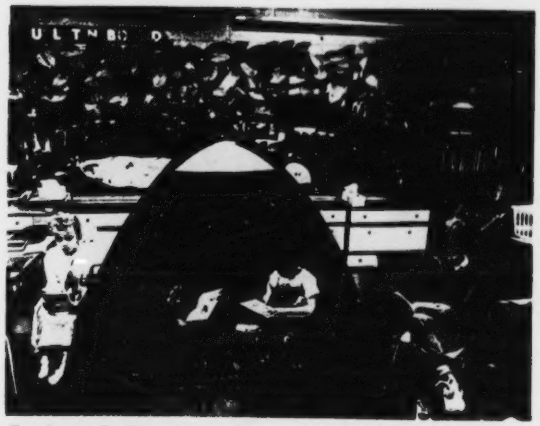
QUALITY LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

The learning environment in primary classrooms provides a psychologically safe, secure and stimulating climate for children. When children enter they see their work and the work of their classmates displayed all around the room. This is like enjoying an entire class full of "refrigerator work" everyday! In addition, these classrooms will literally invite children to learn by providing comfortable places to read and work independently such as:

a couch
or
a rocking chair
or
a small glider
or
an overstuffed chair
or
a bean bag
or
individual desks in quiet places



Students find comfortable places to work in primary classrooms. This area has lots of books for reading time.



Students find inviting places to work or read in primary classrooms.

Small groups will be invited to:

meet in a teepee or tent
or
talk in a small loft structure
or
sit at a round table
or
work on a big rug on the floor

Challenging opportunities for learning will be available such as:

- an aquarium
- a terrarium
- a classroom library
- a book production center
- a puppet stage
- a computer station
- an assortment of art materials
- an assortment of counters, coins, blocks and clocks
- globes, wall and desk maps

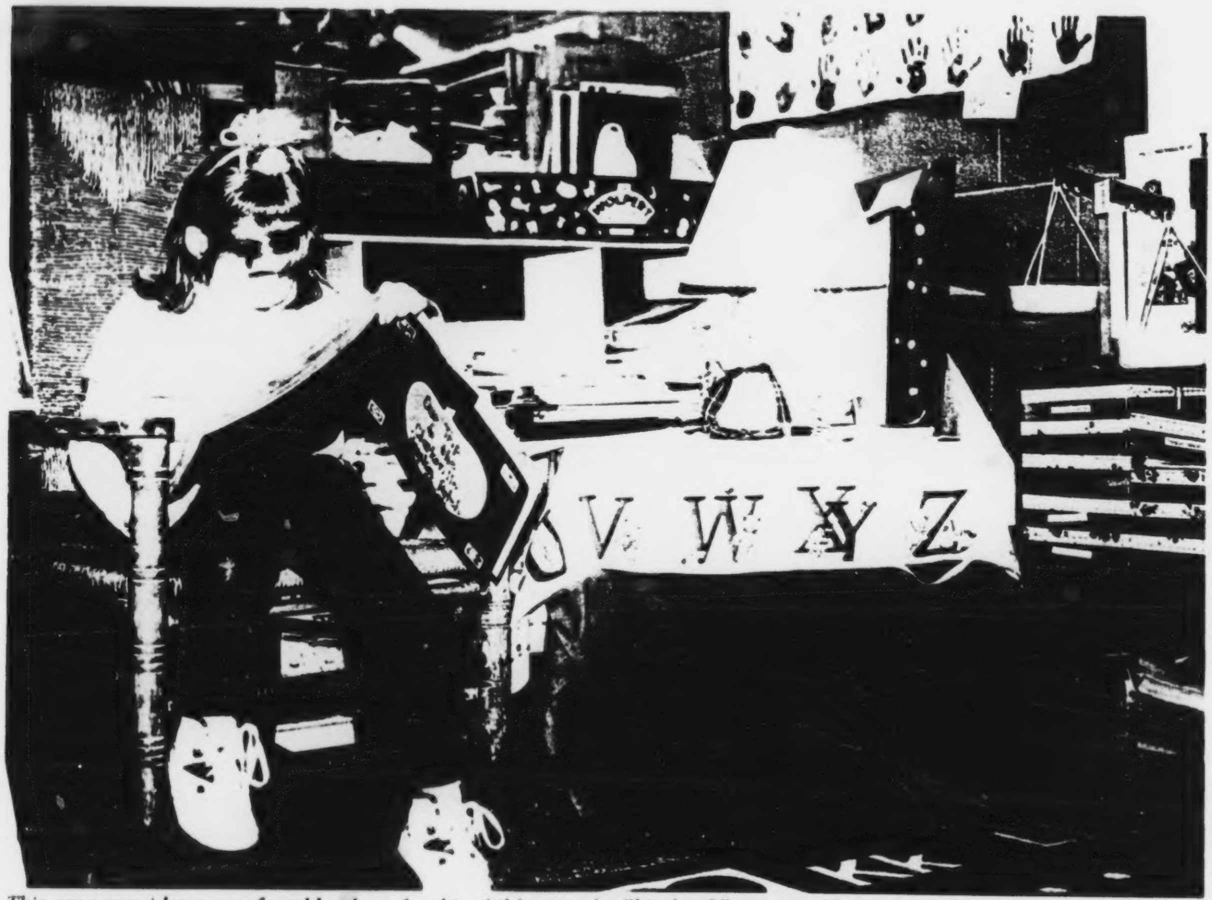
Primary classrooms provide opportunities for continuous learning without such structures as grade levels and fixed ability grouping or procedures for retention and promotion. By allowing children to spend more than one year in the same room teachers:

- provide opportunities for children to be both followers and leaders;
- give children an opportunity to return in the fall to a familiar place or a place where the older children can help with the adjustment;
- allow children the dignity of developing at their own rate without the fear of failing; and
- provide a stable learning environment for more than one year.

> The primary learning environment is totally child centered.

The primary learning environment encourages children to improve their performance and realize their potential rather than compete with others. Young children must learn how to learn and how to reach goals before they are ready to be placed in competitive situations. Play is the work of childhood. In primary school, children are placed in an environment where active learning provides tasks that will encourage young minds. Constructing a graph, measuring the length and width of the room, reading with a friend or writing and binding a book become "play" for children. But for teachers these activities are learning tasks by which children learn to solve complex problems, think critically, comprehend main ideas and sequence, and write in a meaningful and convincing

Primary classrooms are inviting, interesting places for children to learn and explore.



This area provides a comfortable place for this child to read a "big book" prepared by students for classroom enjoyment.

manner. Spaces in the room must be available for all of these learning tasks.

The primary learning environment is totally child centered in that it provides time, space and opportunities for movement, for manipulation of objects, for group discussion and for individual work.

> The learning environment also includes how children are treated...Children are treated with dignity and respect.

The learning environment also includes how children are treated. Children can be responsible for controlling their own behavior, for setting learning goals for themselves and for being self-sufficient by taking care of their own property. Primary teachers encourage this self-sufficiency by providing opportunities for children to be active participants in the learning process. Children are treated with dignity and respect. Teachers make sure that children understand by:

- modeling how a task is to be completed;
- establishing an atmosphere where it is safe to ask questions and take risks;

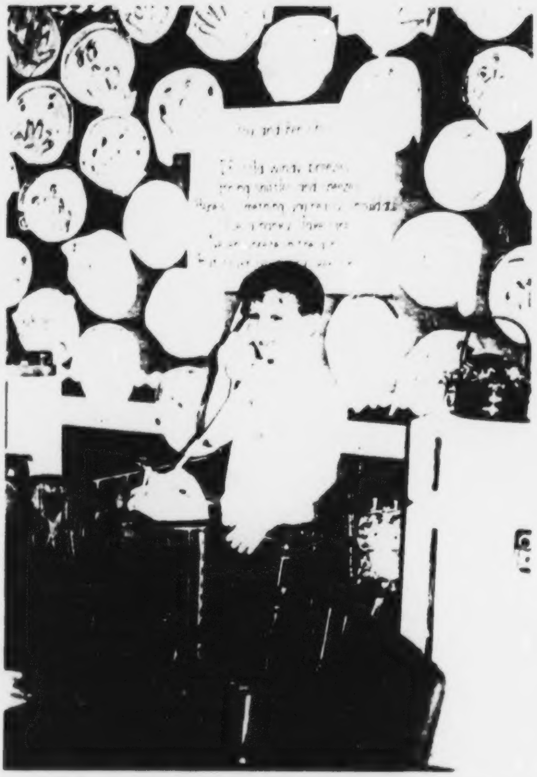
This solarium, added on to an older school building, gives children an opportunity to learn about science in a bright, fun environment.

- encouraging experimentation;
- assuming that the class is interdependent;
- giving instructions on what to do instead of what not to do;
- listening to explanations and to questions; and
- assessing and diagnosing individually.

Establishing an environment where children trust that they will be treated with respect also encourages them to learn ways to show respect for their teachers and for others. Children can devote themselves to learning without the fear of being reprimanded when they do not understand. They know they will make mistakes and that they will be given feedback on how to correct those mistakes. They also know that when they misbehave there will be high expectations that after they know what to do, they will correct their own behavior.

Trust, respect, responsibility and high expectations for achievement are the hallmarks of the primary learning environment.

Primary classrooms are places where young children can become engaged in the learning process. Think of yourself as a small child who is coming to school for the first time. In which classroom, described on the following page, would you be most excited about learning?



Children in this classroom learned about covering their sneezes with a hankie with an art project and decorated their classroom too, helping create their own environment.

CLASSROOM A (Traditional Classroom)	CLASSROOM B (Primary School Classroom)
• Commercially made posters, characters and bulletin boards are displayed.	• Colorful borders surround bulletin boards that are filled with children's work. Signs of "Welcome" and "Glad You Are Here" are surrounded with children's names and their photographs.
• Commercial and teacher-made displays are dominant in the room throughout the year.	• Children's written work, drawings, and projects are attractively and proudly displayed in the room throughout the year.
• Desks are in straight rows. Children are instructed to work quietly and not look on other's papers.	• Four to six desks are arranged in groups. Individual desks are available for independent work.
• Children answer questions in whole-group, teacher-directed discussions and in ability groups.	• Children discuss academic assignments and projects in small groups and in pairs. They work at individual desks when independent work time is needed. They work with the teacher in both small and large groups.
• The teacher's desk is at the front of the room.	• The teacher's desk is in an inconspicuous area of the room.
• Textbooks provide the major resource for learning; some real books, science equipment and math counters, blocks and coins may be available for children after they work in ability groups and complete worksheets/workbooks.	• Classroom libraries, writing centers, computer stations, science experiment centers, math problem solving areas, etc., are set up to create a balance of teacher/student-directed learning. Both teachers and students give feedback on individual and group assignments and projects.
• Chairs are arranged in a semicircle in one corner of the room for three to four daily groups that are based on children's academic ability.	• Teachers assess children daily; they call small groups together in a "quiet zone" of the room to provide direct instruction on a needed skill or understanding that was diagnosed during individual assessment.
• Discipline rules are displayed in the room; all children may be disciplined for the misbehavior of a few. The teacher is responsible for the behavior of the classroom.	• Children work with their teacher to establish class rules or a class constitution. Children learn what is expected of them. Self-sufficiency and self-direction is valued. Children who misbehave are worked with individually or in small groups so that they learn what to do.
• Teachers are responsible for creating and maintaining the learning environment.	• Children are involved in creating and maintaining the learning environment in order to develop planning skills, organization, responsibility and a feeling of self worth.

In the primary classroom there will be a variety of spaces to accommodate student learning. On the next page a primary classroom map is shown. In this classroom space is provided for:

Photo by Rick McComb

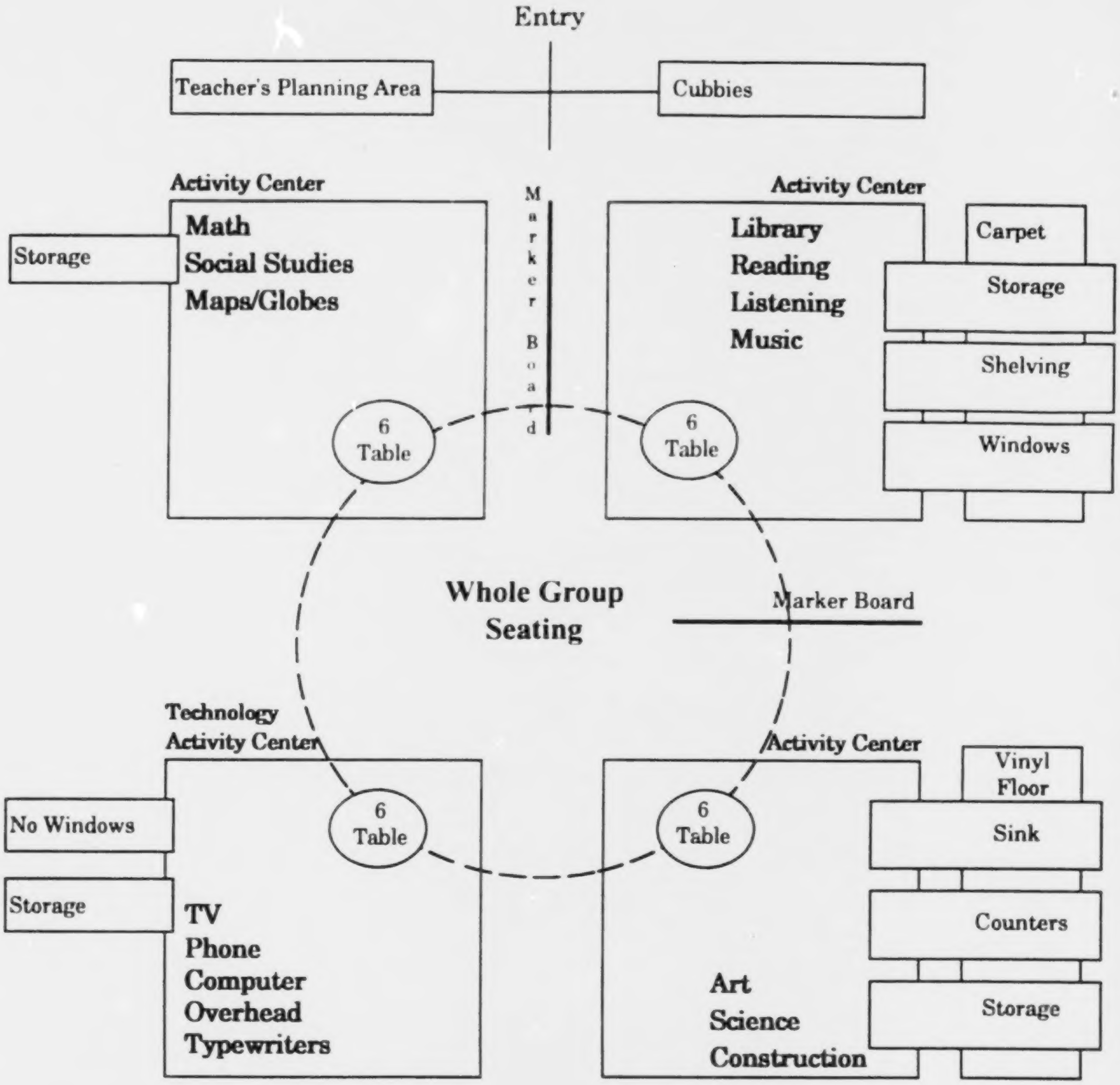
In primary classrooms, children may work wherever they are most comfortable.

Noisy and Quiet Zones or Areas: Children learn best when they have the opportunity to talk with teachers and friends about what they are learning. They also learn best when they have time to be alone to read, write or work on individual projects.

Large Groups Area: The entire class will sometimes meet together for large group activities such as planning field trips, sharing projects, introducing theme studies, focusing on math instruction, listening, etc.

Activities Centers: Small groups and individuals will be assigned and, as part of their daily work plans, will assign themselves to centers where science experiments, writing production, problem solving tasks, computer and calculator assignments, project construction, etc., are produced, revised, and final products are completed for assessment.

This old bath tub is in a quiet corner in the classroom and is a perfect place for reading.



CONCEPTUAL ZONING MAP

Source: "Making a Primary Classroom: A Guide to Arranging Your Learning Environment"

These students are checking to see how their seeds are growing in this science center.

Small Group Area: In both the quiet and noisy zones, tables and/or floor space will be available for children to work in cooperative groups to complete group projects and to receive direct instruction from the teacher on specific skills and understandings that are diagnosed during individual assessment conferences.

> If you want to do something for children, give them an environment where they can touch things as much as they want.

The "Writer's Workshop" in this classroom has ideas for writing, a computer and printer and a typewriter for publishing.

This corner table provides a quiet area for small group work.

Classroom Library: Individual children will choose and read real books here. This is a quiet place where children may spend at least 20 to 30 minutes everyday. They will read both books that they choose and those chosen by the teacher. Teachers may spend time here in conferences with individual children to assess their progress in reading.

This reading center has lots of books and reading materials from which to choose.

Chapter 4

WHAT DO WE EXPECT STUDENTS TO KNOW AND DO?

HOW DO WE KNOW THEY'VE SUCCEEDED?

Photo by Rick McComb

Performance Outcomes and Assessment

PERFORMANCE OUTCOMES

LEARNING GOALS AND OUTCOMES

In Kentucky, six learning goals have been identified as reasonable expectations of achievement for every student from primary through 12th grade. Under these learning goals, 75 outcomes have been identified. An outcome defines the ability to demonstrate consistent quality performances on authentic or real tasks related to a skill area, core concept or principle, personal attribute or thinking process. The 18 outcomes listed below under the six learning goals are those outcomes which are emphasized most during the primary years. These learning goals and outcomes include:

Goal 1: Basic Communication and Math Skills

1. Student expresses him/herself clearly and effectively in oral and written form.
2. Student processes oral and written information as evidenced through listening and reading.
3. Student demonstrates confidence in his/her ability to communicate.
4. Student applies mathematical procedures to problem-solving.

Goal 2: Core Concepts and Principles

5. Student applies mathematical concepts including computation, measurement, estimation and geometry.
6. Student collects, displays and interprets data.
7. Student demonstrates use of monetary values in an economic system.
8. Student demonstrates appropriate and relevant investigative skills to solve specific problems in real life situations.
9. Student creatively expresses ideas and feelings.
10. Student applies democratic principles in relationships with peers.
11. Student identifies contributions of diverse individuals, groups and cultures.

Goal 3: Self-Sufficiency

12. Student demonstrates responsibility for personal belongings.
13. Student shows respect for the property and rights of others.
14. Student displays self-control and self-discipline.
15. Student accesses appropriate resources for learning in school, at home and in the community.

Goal 4: Responsible Group Membership

16. Student participates in group activities cooperatively.

Goal 5: Thinking and Problem-Solving

17. Student chooses appropriate processes and strategies to solve given problems.

Goal 6: Integration of Knowledge

18. Student applies previously learned knowledge and concepts to new situations.

These learning goals and outcomes comprise the base for effective instruction in the primary program.

ASSESSMENT

The belief supported by Kentucky primary schools is that all children can learn if given developmentally appropriate activities and the opportunity to work at their own pace and in flexible groups.

In the past students were required to memorize information, complete worksheets on isolated skills, use workbooks to decode words, complete many pages of skill and drill math worksheets and answer textbook-driven science, social studies and reading questions.

In today's world, knowledge is changing and expanding too quickly for the old methods to be an effective and efficient means for children to learn. Kentucky primary schools are now teaching children through methods which have been shown through research to be the ways children learn best.

Following are three examples of the changing methods of instruction, the rationale behind them and some recommended techniques for assessing learning.

Reading

Children learn to read by reading. They hear stories read to them, read chorally with a group, and work on appropriate skills within the context of real-life stories to improve their decoding (phonics) skills, their vocabulary, and their understanding of the story. Individual assessment includes diagnosing areas of strength as well as identifying areas on which to focus next. Teachers confer with children to discuss what they are doing well and to help students set goals. Children become active participants in their own learning plan. They talk with their teacher about their skills, concepts and understandings in order to identify future learning goals. Children understand that learning these skills and concepts will enable them to read exciting stories that interest and motivate them.

Children are assessed in reading in several ways which include but are not limited to:

1. Individual assessment - Children read to their teacher appropriate paragraphs taken from real stories. As the child reads, the teacher records decoding or phonetic errors made by the child and asks comprehension questions. The teacher then groups and regroups children (flexible grouping) so that learning is based on what children actually need to learn next instead of what a textbook dictates.

Photo by Rick McComb

One way teachers assess student learning is by having conferences with individual students to listen to them read.

2. Project presentations - Children present projects to groups of classmates based on books/stories they have read. Comprehension is assessed as teachers observe the presentation of these projects.

3. Anecdotal records - Teachers keep anecdotal records (notes) of each child's progress as they observe the child reading orally, reading silently, answering questions both orally and in writing, reading in groups and reading individually anytime during the day and in any area of integrated study.

4. Appropriate textbook assessments - In anthologies (formerly called basals) assessments are available. These assessments can be given at appropriate intervals.

5. Book reports - Book reports, both oral and written, are evaluated for developmentally appropriate vocabulary and comprehension.

6. Flexible groups - When children's needs are identified, teachers will organize small groups who need to work on a specific skill or concept. When the skill or concept is mastered by the children, the flexible groups will be disbanded and replaced with different groups of children working on newly identified skills or concepts.

These students are writing in their journals, a daily activity.

These students are working together in a "writing conference."

Writing

Children learn to write by writing. Young children are capable of writing very sophisticated prose which results in complex usage of our language if they are not required to spell all words correctly and use only correct grammar and punctuation. Keeping daily journals, writing letters to friends, thank-you notes to relatives and composing reports, stories and poems are some of the ways that children learn to write well.

Children are evaluated only on their final drafts. Corrective but encouraging feedback is given on preliminary drafts. Teachers assess writing by:

1. Informal Evaluation - Teachers respond in writing to children's daily journals. (Often done on a separate "stick on" sheet.)

2. Organization of Writing Conferences - Children conduct writing conferences with each other based on carefully explained instructions. They offer suggestions to each other on how writing can be improved.

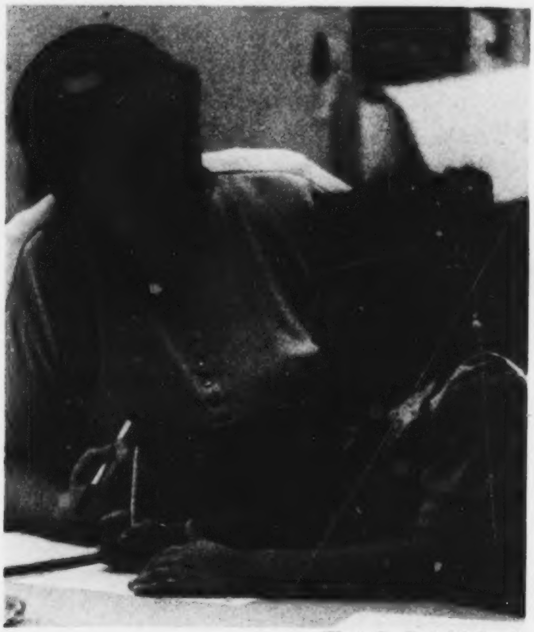


Photo by Rick McComb

Teachers confer with students to assess their performance, provide feedback and suggestions.

Teachers confer with children individually when drafts are submitted so that feedback is given in both oral and written form.

3. Flexible Groups - Teachers work with small groups of children on grammar, punctuation and spelling as each child's assessment indicates readiness for these skills.

> Children learn to write by writing.

4. Provision of Resources - Dictionaries and thesauruses are provided for children's use. Teachers assess how effectively children use these resources.

5. Final Evaluation - Teachers thoroughly evaluate the final drafts of children's work.

Writing Portfolios/Learning Profiles

Teachers will also assess writing through the compilation of a learning profile (portfolio). The writing in this learning profile will be evaluated by the standards of effective writing criteria set for fourth grade portfolios. At the fourth grade level children are partially assessed through a portfolio which contains selections that the child feels best illustrate his or her work. The pieces of writing must be the student's original writing. These pieces include:

- One poem, play/script or piece of fiction;
- One personal narrative;
- One piece of writing that presents or supports a position or idea; tells about a problem and its solution or informs;
- One piece of writing from a study area other than English/language arts; and
- A letter in which the student discusses with the reviewer the "best piece" and reflects upon individual growth as a writer.

Teachers work with small groups of students on writing skills.

The following is the effective writing criteria by which fourth graders are evaluated:

Purpose/Approach
The degree to which the writer
- establishes and maintains a purpose
- communicates with the audience

Idea Development/Support
The degree to which the writer provides thoughtful, detailed support to develop the main idea or ideas.

Organization
The degree to which the writer demonstrates:
- logical sequencing
- coherence
- transitions/organizational signals

Sentences
The degree to which the writer includes sentences that are:
- varied in structure and length
- constructed effectively
- complete and correct

Wording
The degree to which the writer exhibits correct and effective:
- word choice
- usage

Surface Features
The degree to which the writer demonstrates correct:
- spelling
- capitalization
- punctuation

Primary teachers will use this effective writing criteria when evaluating children's selections. By consistently using this criteria, teachers will prepare students for successful completion of their fourth grade writing assessment.

Math

Children become competent in math by working with real objects as they practice mathematical functions which they eventually will memorize. Emphasis is placed on working with real objects such as counters, coins, blocks and clocks as children learn to add, subtract, multiply and divide. Understanding patterns and place value is essential for young learners.

Photo by Rick McComb

This teacher is working with a small group of students using math "manipulatives" or blocks to learn math concepts.

Assessment in mathematics includes observing and recording data as children:

1. Complete problems using real objects;

This student is learning what 100 is by stringing 100 Cheerios on a string, a "hands on" math lesson.

2. Explain in writing and/or orally how mathematical solutions were reached;
3. Complete performance events such as measuring the length and width of a desk, using a calculator to determine the area of the school or determining how many football fields would fit into the Toyota plant in Georgetown;
4. Work cooperatively in small groups to solve problems; and
5. Write his/her own analysis of how the problem was solved.

The emphasis is on performance. Children are asked to use their knowledge of mathematics to solve complex problems. When errors in computation, application or analysis are observed by the teacher, flexible groups are formed to instruct the children on how to correct those errors. After mastery of the skill, the group is disbanded and new concepts are introduced.

Similar methods are being used to assess science and social studies. These methods center on performance. Children are asked to demonstrate their ability to use certain skills and concepts, and prove their understanding by participating in activities such as problem solving, project completion and demonstrations.

Assessment in primary school involves being able to demonstrate both individual and practical uses of the skills, core concepts and thinking processes that have been learned.

The emphasis is on performance. Children are asked to use their knowledge of mathematics to solve complex problems.

Math Portfolios/Learning Profiles

Teachers are also encouraged to assess math through a learning profile (portfolio). As with writing, math is evaluated by the standards for 4th grade math portfolios. The portfolio process allows children to demonstrate their strengths and practice in order to master areas of difficulty. Developing these math portfolios also allows for varied learning styles and promotes self-assessment and self confidence in mathematics. These portfolios give children the opportunity to feel successful and to self-assess as they compile and confidently display their best work.

A child's math portfolio might contain tasks that demonstrate these criteria which are part of the 4th grade math portfolio:

- Problem solving
  - understands strategies
  - computes accurately

- Mathematical reasoning

- Mathematical communication
  - uses correct language
  - uses correct representations

- Integration/connections of core concepts
  - numbers
  - mathematical procedures
  - space and dimension
  - measurement
  - change
  - structure
  - data related to both certain and uncertain events

- Types and contexts

PRIMARY PROGRESS REPORTS (REPORT CARDS)

Primary progress reports are designed to give parents more information about their child's progress than traditional letter grades. The reports are also designed to focus positively on what students can do and what skills, concepts and understandings they will focus on developing in the future.

Grades are relative. Standards for the grade of "A" set by one teacher could equate to a "B" or even a "C" for another teacher. In contrast, the marks on primary progress reports indicate a student's developmental level on a particular skill, concept or process compared to a standard for independent excellence in accomplishing that skill, concept or process. For example, in Kentucky some districts have chosen to report progress based on the marks:

B = Beginning
D = Developing
I = Independent
NE = Not evaluated at this time

or

M = Most of the time
S = Some of the time
N = Not yet

"B" indicates that the student has been introduced to the skill or concept, is receiving help and can benefit from help at home. "D" implies that the student is developing or growing in that area and is practicing the skill or concept with continual progress. "I" indicates that the child is capable of using this skill or concept on his/her own in almost any context. "NE" means that the child is not yet working on the skill or concept.

In contrast an "F" implies that the child has failed at some task which in turn may label the student as a failure in his/her own mind. A child learning to play a new sport would be seen as a beginner, not a failure. He or she needs many opportunities to

> We can now show parents what children can do -- for example, books written by children -- instead of talking about numbers and percentages in a grade book.
>
> A primary teacher

HENDERSON COUNTY SCHOOLS
Henderson, Kentucky

Progress Report for Primary School

NAME OF STUDENT

ACADEMIC PROGRESS

Students proceed at different rates through the primary program. Emphasis is on continuous progress and success. Your child's progress report is a comparison of his/her work to observable and measurable outcomes, rather than to other children.

	1			2			3			4		
LANGUAGE ARTS	Most of the time	Some of the time	Not yet	Most of the time	Some of the time	Not yet	Most of the time	Some of the time	Not yet	Most of the time	Some of the time	Not yet
Reading/Literature												
- Expresses an interest in reading												
- Selects appropriate reading material												
- Reads material independently												
- Understands material read												
- Responds to literature through a variety of media												
- Participates in group activities												
COMMUNICATIONS												
- States ideas clearly and in sequence												
- Generates own ideas												
- Generates own stories												
- Demonstrates oral language skills												
- Writes legibly												
- Participates in group activities												
MATHEMATICS												
- Understands math concepts												
- Computes accurately												
- Applies concepts in problem solving												
- Participates in group activities												
INTEGRATED SCIENCES												
- Understands concepts in Science/Health												
- Understands concepts in Social Studies												
- Demonstrates ability to use reference/research materials												
- Participates in group activities												
SOCIAL SKILLS												
- Listens to and follows oral directions												
- Reads and follows written directions												
- Is an effective group member												
- Organizes time, work and personal belongings												
- Demonstrates self motivation												
- Uses time productively												
- Completes assigned tasks												
- Works independently												
- Respects rights and properties of others												
- Follows classroom and school procedures												
UNIFIED ARTS												
- Art												
- Physical Education												
- Music												

ATTENDANCE REPORT	1	2	3	4	Total
- Days Present					
- Days Absent					
- Days Tardy					

practice in order to be successful. In a similar fashion, a student learning to become a writer, reader, scientist or mathematician is also a beginner, not a failure. Such students also need opportunities to develop, to practice and to learn from teachers and others who excel. Some students will need longer to develop, practice and learn than others.

During the transition to primary some people feel that children should receive both grades and qualitative reporting. Using both grades, comparing one child to another, and qualitative reporting, comparing performance to a standard, is confusing for children who would be trying to reach a standard and at the same time compete for a grade.

> Progress reports should be shared and discussed with children before they are sent home so that children can understand their own progress.

Photo by Rick McComb

Primary teachers spend time one-on-one with students, discussing their work and progress.

Progress reports should be shared and discussed with children before they are sent home so that children can understand their own progress. It is important that students become partners with teachers and parents in becoming responsible for their own progress in accomplishing learning goals.

In Kentucky, local districts are responsible for developing the primary progress report that best meets the needs of their children. In Henderson County, the primary progress report supplies specific information that communicates to parents what their children can do and how parents can work with their children at home. The marks on primary progress reports should assist parents in understanding how their child is progressing in specific areas based on his/her development. They should also help identify areas where parents can help their child at home.

Effective primary reports also provide a space for narrative or written reporting where teachers can further clarify and identify areas of success as well as areas where additional practice and assistance is needed.

Chapter 5

HOW CAN PARENTS PARTICIPATE IN THEIR CHILD'S EDUCATION?

Parents as Partners

PARENTS AS PARTNERS

Parents and teachers have a common interest in the total development of the child and are constantly challenged to respond to the diverse needs of children. Parents often ask themselves: How can I help my children? What kinds of experiences can I provide to support and benefit my child? Parents and teachers represent a natural team to respond to these questions. They must communicate with each other to provide children the best opportunities for learning.

Parents have the responsibility to work with the school in establishing workable plans for home/school cooperation. Parents can do this by attending school activities, participating in parent/teacher conferences, talking to teachers on the phone, sending notes to teachers and attending parent education workshops. When children see parents and teachers working together as partners they have a positive model for working together in school and the encouragement to do well.

Parents benefit greatly from their involvement as members of the home/school partnership. They have the opportunity to learn about what happens in school, how children relate to other students and adults, how they act in the classroom and how the teacher organizes learning experiences for the children. When parents are involved in a partnership, they become more sensitive to the needs of their children at home as well as at school.

This parent has volunteered in her daughter's classroom and is reading with her daughter.

In the multiage (nongraded) primary school classrooms, parents can expect a well-designed school environment that enables children to grow socially, emotionally, academically, creatively and physically in positive ways.

What to look for when you visit your child's classroom

- Children should be actively engaged in working on projects, active experiments and play.
- Children should be dictating and writing their own stories or reading real books.
- The classroom should be organized to include learning centers and small group work.
- Teachers should be talking to small groups of children or working with individual students or occasionally talking with the whole group.
- Children should be creating their own artwork, not just coloring and pasting together adult drawings.

Parent Teacher Conferences

Parents and teachers become partners to exchange ideas, information and insights about children.

Parents should not wait until the teacher calls to be actively involved. Creating a consistent visual presence in the school is a significant way to be a positive advocate for your child's success.

At school conferences parents should expect an honest, objective appraisal of their child's performance in school based on his or her strengths and limitations. Parents can expect this assessment to include a description of specific behaviors or events that the teacher has observed. Parents should share similar information with the teacher.

Parent teacher conferences are important in working together to help students.

Conferences should be scheduled throughout the year to follow the child's progress. Conferences should focus on developmental phases of the child and not on pages covered in a book or test scores.

How to prepare for the conference

- Think about what you want to accomplish during the conference time.
- Write down your questions.
- Take along any papers or assignments your child has brought home that created problems or confusion.

> The solution is to work together, sharing problems and solutions while recognizing and supporting each other's best efforts and intentions.
>
> Wayne B. Jennings, 1989

- Be aware that communication is the key to successful conferences. Be friendly and not defensive about your child or your role as a parent.
- Don't leave the conference until you have your questions answered and appropriate learning strategies for your child have been determined.
- If there are problems, agree on another time for checking on progress of the proposed strategies.

Questions you might ask the teacher

- Could I see my child's portfolio in order to discuss how he/she is progressing over time?
- Would you explain the primary progress reporting form?
- Tell me about my child's abilities and progress in reading, writing and computation.
- How does my child use these competencies in real-life situations?
- What nonacademic traits does my child have that may help or hinder his/her learning?
- How does my child feel about him/herself as a person and a learner at school?
- How does he/she feel about being a member of a group and how well does he/she participate as a group member?
- How do other children perceive my child as a peer and as a member of a group?
- What types of support does my child need for success in school and at home?
- How can we as parents be involved in the work of this classroom or others in the school?

Questions the teacher might ask you

- How is your child feeling about school? Children may tell you things about school that they don't tell the teacher.
- What is your child interested in? Teachers can suggest and find books about things your child likes to encourage reading or make assignments for your child based on his/her interests and level of learning.
- Are there things happening at home that might affect your child's school work? It is helpful for teachers to know about big changes or stressful things happening to families like a new baby or an illness or death in the family.

- Does your child have any health or physical problems that might affect school work?

By working together with the school, parents can have a significant influence on their children's education. Encourage your children to excel by building self-esteem and reinforcing the skills and concepts taught at school.

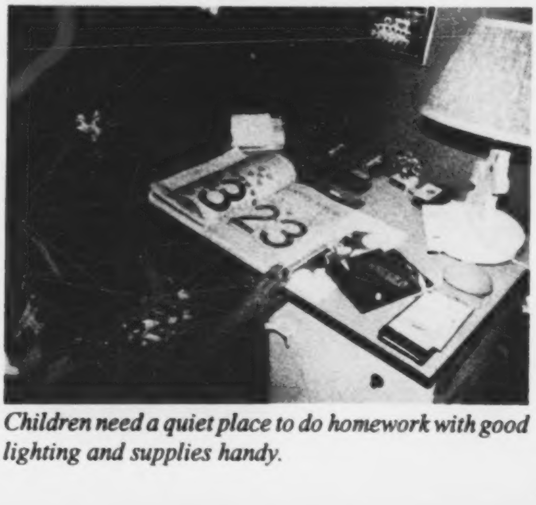
How to Help With Homework

Parents can become active partners in their children's education through home activities. Homework may be the most consistent day-to-day source of information about what children are doing in school.

Become involved in the homework process from the beginning. You are important to this process, not so much in helping with daily assignments but for the motivation and follow-up assistance you can provide as well as the high expectations for achievement.

All children need their own place to work at home. Talk with your child to decide where he/she prefers to study. It should be a quiet, well lit place. Have materials stored in a special place. Materials you may want to have on hand include:

pencils
crayons
pens
objects for counting
picture dictionary
construction paper
paper
markers
erasers
tape
paste
scissors
rulers



Children need a quiet place to do homework with good lighting and supplies handy.

Parents can help by keeping homework assignments in a place where they can be checked easily.

Even if homework is completed at school or in an after-school program, there still should be a place for work and study.

Remember to insist that television, radio and distracting entertainment sources are turned off. If possible, the work/study area should be away from where other children are playing and "off limits" to those not studying.

Work with your child to schedule time for daily homework sessions. If possible, make this a quiet time or reading time for the whole family. When children do not bring work from school, have activities planned so they are working consistently at the same time each day. Have books available so children can read or look at the pictures. Daily journal writing and letter writing are also good activities to accommodate the differing developmental needs and strengths of children. The homework schedule and assignments can be posted on the refrigerator to be signed by both parent and child when finished. The important thing to remember is to be consistent.

Work with your child to plan for days when sports practices, music lessons and other activities may interfere with your daily routine. Children should be praised for their efforts each day in order to provide the encouragement, support and motivation they need to continue working and to do their best work.

What Parents Can Do to Help Children Learn More Effectively

Learning begins at home. Helping children at home helps them achieve academic success in school and keeps them motivated to continue learning. Even the best schools cannot educate children alone.

Learning doesn't just happen. Good education takes three partners: parent, teacher and child. What, then, is the parent's role? What can parents do "to help my child do better?"

The following tips may give you some ideas to better organize at-home time, making your home a "learning place." Select those that are appropriate for your family. You will find recommendations for handling difficult situations such as television and homework; procedures for teaching children how to work and how to be independent; ideas to calm the most difficult time of day when everyone is tired and hungry.

- Speak to your child using positive and encouraging words. You've worked hard on that project, good job, I like your story, or that's an interesting idea and let's talk about it are a few examples.

- Ask your child about school each day -- What was the most interesting thing that happened at school today? Tell me more about it. I'd like to have you read your story and tell me more about your ideas. What new spelling word did you learn today? What new questions do you have after today's lessons?

- Read with your children. This is a treat children always enjoy. Find time to do this on a regular basis. You can be a role model for your children. Let your children see you reading - the mail, a newspaper, a book, a recipe or a set of instructions. Make regular trips to the library or bookmobile. Schools and libraries have book lists for children. Inquire

When parents take the time to listen to children reading aloud that reinforces the importance of reading.

about these. Read with your children just for fun. Do not attempt to turn these experiences into reading lessons at home.

- Work with your children to develop a time schedule for homework, outside interests, play and TV watching. In this way, your children will know what you expect of them and they can then set expectations for themselves.
- Display work at home. Place art work and written pieces all over the house for display. You can use a bulletin board, magnets on the refrigerator or an indoor clothesline with clothespins. Children enjoy changing their displays themselves as they create new material. Keep art work and written pieces in a scrapbook which you and your children can review from time to time. This is fun for both parents and children. It also shows children how they are doing things better and that you value their work.
- Do your best to send your children to school every day, well-rested and adequately fed.
- Encourage socialization with children of different ages by letting your children invite schoolmates home, enrolling them in after-school programs and playing board and card games with them. Show them how to play by the rules, take turns and be a good winner or loser. Support them in playing sports by emphasizing the joy of play, not winning.

Sometimes students need help or encouragement with homework.

- Take advantage of opportunities to use play as a way to help your children handle frustrating situations and solve simple problems. A tower of blocks that continuously collapses can drive a child to tears. You can offer a few suggestions, but at the same time you should ask what he or she thinks is the best way to keep the tower from collapsing. Helping your child turn a bad situation into a success reinforces self-confidence.
- Fill your home with talk. Provide a variety of experiences for children to expand their knowledge and vocabulary for writing, such as reading newspaper articles aloud and discussing them, listening to books on tape and having a dictionary handy to look up new words.
- Share writing experiences you encounter on the job such as purchase orders, letters, memos and receipts. In this way, writing has application to the real world. Let your children see you writing.
- Communicate in writing at home. Involve children in family activities requiring the writing of shopping lists, written directions, thank you notes and letters. Provide chalkboard or bulletin board space for written messages.
- Encourage letter writing by having children write thank you notes for gifts. Encourage other types of letter writing such as invitations to birthday and other

parties, homemade greeting cards for friends and family members, letters to editors, businesses, people they admire, civic leaders, writers of children's books and favorite sports and entertainment personalities. Have them send letters for travel brochures, free samples and information on hobbies and other interests.

- Talk with each other through brief notes. Reminders can be written in a note and posted near the door. Messages can also be used to send a warm greeting; for example, tuck notes into mittens and gloves, lunch boxes and books. Expect your children to write back. This is reading and writing practice that also says "I love you."

- Offer writing projects at home. Young children can draw an illustration and tell you about it. Write their words below it. Words then begin to have meaning. Play word games like Scrabble and crossword puzzles with your older children. Create signs, keep a diary, a vacation notebook, an autobiography, a neighborhood newspaper, as well as a scrapbook or photo album with written comments. Encourage your children to give a writing project as a gift, such as an illustrated story or biography.

Children love to read their own stories to their parents and talk about them.

- Help your children with their writing projects. With praise and encouragement, writing activities can be both enjoyable and motivating for children. Encourage your children to edit their own work. Provide assistance when requested. Focus first on the content rather than spelling and grammar.

- Encourage responsibility by teaching children how to wash dishes, to care for the family pet or to make their beds.

- Encourage a variety of free-time activities such as bike riding, reading and building models.

- Monitor television viewing. Limit time spent engaged in passive activities such as watching television. Give children practice in scheduling their own TV time and encourage them to watch educational programs. Watch programs with them and review the programs together. Relate current events and map study with TV watching. The daily news broadcasts contain stories from all over the world. Post a world map next to the TV. Children can immediately look up places where news occurs. Keep reference books such as a World Almanac and dictionary nearby. These provide additional information when children's curiosity is high. See also Appendix C.

- Let children make decisions. Encourage children to express their opinions. Listen to their ideas without interrupting or disapproving. Dinner time is a good time for children to share their ideas. Involve children in decisions for planning meals, chores, family outings and vacations. Let them know when you think they have made good decisions. When they make poor decisions, discuss what happened and what they might do the next time a similar situation occurs.

- Provide science activities that will extend children's curiosity to ask questions and to seek answers. Catching salamanders, taking a bike apart, collecting rocks and leaves, looking at the furnace and plumbing pipes, listening to noises in the kitchen, repairing broken machines, growing and taking care of plants are ways to encourage exploration of a child's environment.

- Take your children on field trips and shopping excursions. Trips of this kind help children build vocabulary and experience language and mathematics in the real world.

- Take advantage of family errands to help develop mathematical skills. Read and compare speed limit signs. Estimate distances between stops. Develop ability with fractions while cooking or baking. Put the bank on your list of errands by opening a savings account for the children. While at the grocery store, involve children in figuring out the best buys. Use newspaper advertisements to compare prices.

- Encourage your children to follow instructions. For example, invite them to help you cook; following a recipe (measuring ingredients, cracking eggs, kneading dough) can help children have fun while learning about step-by-step procedures, problem solving and mathematical ideas.

Children learn to measure when helping cook, a good lesson in fractions.

> When you have parent support you have the help you need so children get more individual attention and projects can be more advanced.
>
> Ruth Collins
> primary teacher

What Parents Can Do to Help at School

The most important way parents can be partners is to help their children at home. For those parents who are able to volunteer to help teachers, there are many things that can be done.

Parents can help in the classroom in many ways, such as typing young children's stories.

Ask your child's teacher if there are things you can do to help. If you can spend time in the classroom, you might read to children or listen to their reading, tutor students, serve as a "scribe" as children dictate stories or help produce "hands on" materials for classroom use.

If you are not able to be at the school during school hours, you could help by making hands on activities at home.

Working with your school council as an elected parent member or as a committee member is a very important way in which you can share in decision making at your school. PTA/PTOs are also a good way to become involved in your children's school.

The responsibility for educating our children must be shared between school, home and community. Your role is very important! You can make a significant difference in the academic achievement of your children.

Parents can help by making charts and "hands on" materials for primary classes.

Chapter 6

READING WITH CHILDREN

Children who are not told stories and who are not read to will have few reasons for wanting to learn to read.

Gail E. Haley
1971 Caldecott Medal acceptance speech

READING WITH CHILDREN

Reading To Your Child

When reading to young children, hold them on your lap or have them sit close with your arm around them.

When reading to early learners, follow the words with your fingers so they begin to see that what you are seeing on the page relates to what you are reading.

Young children love repetitions and patterns and like to have you read their favorite stories over and over. Often they will memorize some of the story and "read" along with you.

Selecting Books

When you select books for your children there are several things to consider:

1. If your child has a favorite book character, look for other books with that character or by that author.
2. Choose books about things that interest your child.
3. Choose books with characters that children can identify with and that have believable plots.
4. Find some books that are "just for fun" -- ones that are colorful or funny, with make believe words or rhyming patterns.
5. Select books with lovely pictures and drawings and ask your child to describe what they see and what they think is happening.

Reading With Older Children

Reading with your children does not have to stop once they learn to read. Sharing good books by reading aloud together is a good way to enjoy time spent together. Consider the following:

1. Read books out loud together on long trips. Take turns reading and talk about the story.
2. Have books and magazines available in the car for times when you end up waiting longer than expected -- in the doctor's office, for other appointments, for car pool waiting and so on.
3. Make audio tapes of books children can listen to on trips.
4. Read the books your child is reading so you can talk about them together.
5. Start a tradition of reading special stories aloud together during the holidays or on other special occasions. Favorite stories never get old even as children grow older.

> Few children learn to love books by themselves. Someone has to lure them into the wonderful world of the written word; someone has to show them the way.
>
> Orville Prescott
> from **A Father Reads to His Children**

Building A Family Library

A collection of children's books does not have to be large, but it should include favorite stories, poetry, information books and resource materials. Quality children's literature can be found in places that sell books but don't overlook sidewalk and yard sales.

A BIBLIOGRAPHY OF BOOKS FOR PARENTS AND CHILDREN

> "The single most important activity for building the knowledge required for eventual success in reading is reading aloud to children.... It is a practice that should continue throughout the grades."
>
> from **Becoming a Nation of Readers:**
> **The Report of the Commission on Reading**

The following bibliographies of suggested reading material have been collected from various sources. The lists are certainly not comprehensive and are meant only to be suggestions. Some out-of-print books are included since they are still available in libraries. Reading levels/ages are arbitrary, as children of the same age often differ markedly in listening and reading skills, interests and social maturity; the books are listed in only one category but many belong in several categories and could be enjoyed by a wide age range.

* Recommend other books by the same author in the same category.

PRESCHOOL CHILDREN

The importance of reading aloud to the youngest babies is to get them accustomed to the rhythmic sound of the reading voice so that they associate it with a peaceful, secure time of day. The more language children hear in the early months, the greater the natural language growth. Books to stimulate sight and hearing with colorful pictures and exciting sounds are important.

BOARD BOOKS

These books are durable volumes printed in nontoxic inks on heavy, laminated pages that are easy for little fingers to turn and can be quickly wiped clean.

Bailey, Jill*	Baby's First Words
Boynton, Sandra*	A to Z
Czekeres, Cyndy*	Thumpity Thump Gets Dressed
DePaola, Tomie*	Katie and Kit at the Beach
Duke, Kate*	Bedtime
Di Fiori, Lawrence	My First Book
Greeley, Valerie*	Zoo Animals
Hoban, Tana	Red, Blue, Yellow Shoe
Hooper, Meredith	Seven Eggs
Hunds, Hargrave	Bunny Sees
Lionni, Leo*	Colors
McCue, Dick	Kitty's Colors
Mayer, Mercer*	Fireman Critter
Michel, Guy*	Little Shoe
Oxenbury, Helen*	Say Goodnight
Rockwell, Anne*	At the Playground
Scarry, Richard*	The Lowly Worm Word Book
Tafuri, Nancy*	My Friends
Wells, Rosemary*	Max's Toys
Ziefert, Harriet*	Breakfast Time!

ABC BOOKS

ABC books help young children in learning their ABC's and also contribute to visual literacy, helping the child organize what he sees. They serve as identification books, usually naming familiar objects or animals, less often identifying people.

Anno, Mitsumasa*	Anno's Alphabet: An Adventure in Imagination
Azarian, Mary	A Farmer's Alphabet
Boynton, Sandra	A is for Angry
Farber, Norma	This Is the Ambulance Leaving the Zoo
Feelings, Muriel	Jambo Means Hello: Swahili Alphabet Book
Greenaway, Kate	A Apple Pie
Hoban, Tana	26 Letters and 99 Cents
Lear, Edward*	ABC
Lobel, Arnold	On Market Street
Lyon, George Ella	A B Cedar
Provensen, Alice and Martin	A Peaceable Kingdom: The Abecedarius
Wildsmith, Brian	Brian Wildsmith's ABC

> If we could get our parents to read to their preschool children fifteen minutes a day, we could revolutionize the schools.
>
> Superintendent of Chicago Public Schools (1981)

COUNTING BOOKS

Counting books range from those that present numbers, usually from one to 10, in the simplest way, to books that have continuity, tell a story or are used by an artist for elaborately imaginative shapes or situations.

Allen, Robert	Numbers: A First Counting Book
Anno, Mitsumasa	Anno's Counting Book
Bang, Molly	Ten, Nine, Eight
Carle, Eric*	My Very First Book of Numbers
Christlow, Eileen	Five Little Monkeys Jumping On The Bed
Chwast, Seymour and Martin Moskof	Still Another Number Book
Hobzek, Mildred	We Came A-Marching
Marshall, Ray and Paul Korky*	Pop-Up Numbers #1: Addition
Ormerod, Jan	Young Joe
Sendak, Maurice	One Was Johnny: A Counting Book
Seymour, Brenda	First Counting

CONCEPT BOOKS

Concept books help the child master such abstract concepts as time, distance, size, mass, color, shape, differences and similarities in people and the difference between "between" and "through."

Ahlberg, Janet	The Baby's Catalogue
Anno, Mistumasa	The King's Flower
Bortin, Helen*	Do You Go Where I Go?
Bruna, Dick*	Snuffy
Carle, Eric*	My Very First Book of Colors
Corey, Dorothy	Tomorrow You Can
Crews, Donald*	Carousel
Fujikawa, Gyo	Let's Play
Hoban, Tana*	Circles, Triangles and Squares
Krauss, Ruth	The Backward Day
Kunhardt, Dorothy	Pat the Bunny
McNaughton, Colin	Autumn
Oxenbury, Helen*	Dressing
Provensen, Alice	The Year at Maple Hill Farm
Tresselt, Alvin*	It's Time Now!
Watanabe, Shigeo*	I Can Ride It!
White, Paul	Janet at School
Winthrop, Elizabeth	That's Mine!

POETRY AND VERSE/SONG

Verses offer many opportunities for the development of a fine sense of the musical quality of language and appeal because of action and pictures.

Brown, Marc	Hand Rhymes
Chorao, Kay	The Baby's Lap Book
Clifton, Lucille	Everett Anderson's Year
DePaola, Tomie	Mother Goose
deRegniers, Beatrice S.	Sing a Song of Popcorn
Fujikawa, Gyo	Original Mother Goose
Greenfield, Eloise	Honey I Love
Lobel, Arnold*	The Just Right Mother Goose
Piper, Watty	Mother Goose, A Treasury of Best Loved Rhymes
Pooley, Sarah	A Day of Rhymes
Rounds, Glen	Old MacDonald Had a Farm
Stains, Bill	All God's Critters Got a Place in the Choir

WORDLESS BOOKS

Wordless books contain no words; the story is told entirely with pictures arranged in sequence. Wordless books can be "read" by pre-and beginning readers who "tell" the story, using the pictures for clues to the emerging plot.

Alexander, Martha*	Bobo's Dream
Anderson, Lena*	Bunny Party
Anno, Mitsumasa*	Anno's Britain
Aruego, Jose	Look What I Can Do
Bonners, Susan	Just in Passing
Crews, Donald	Truck
DeGroat, Diane	Alligator's Toothache
DePaola, Tomie	Pancakes for Breakfast
Euvremer, Teryl	Sun's Up
Felix, Monique*	The Story of a Little Mouse
Goodall, John S.*	The Adventures of Paddy Pork
Hogrogian, Nonny	Apples
Hutchins, Pat*	Rosie's Walk
Krahn, Fernando*	Amanda and the Mysterious Carpet Catch That Cat
Mari, Iela	The Magic Balloon
Mari, Iela and Enzo	The Apple and the Moth
Mayer, Mercer*	Ah-Choo!
McCully, Emily*	New Baby
Spier, Peter	Rain
Tafuri, Nancy*	Early Morning in the Barn
Turkle, Brinton	Deep in The Forest
Winter, Paula	The Bear and the Fly

PREDICTABLE BOOKS

Books that contain word or sentence patterns that are repeated often enough to enable children to predict their appearance and to join in on the reading are called predictable books.

Adams, Pam	This Old Man
Aliki*	Go Tell Aunt Rhody
Balian, Lorna	The Aminal
Bass, Marilyn and Marvin Goldman	The Sun Book
Baten, Helen and Barbara von Molnar	I'm Going To Build A Super Market One of These Days
Blake, Quentin	Mr. Magnolia
Bonne, Rose and Alan Mills	I Know An Old Lady
Brown, Marcia	The Three Billy Goats Gruff
Brown, Margaret W.*	Goodnight Moon
Carle, Eric*	Do You Want to Be My Friend?
Delaney, A.	The Gunnywolf
Domanska, Janina	If All The Seas Were One Sea
Eastman, P.D.	Are You My Mother?
Emberly, Barbara	Drummer Hoff
Flack, Marjorie	Ask Mister Bear
Flora, James	Leopold, The See-Through Crumbpicker
Fox, Mem	Hattie and the Fox
Galdone, Paul*	The Gingerbread Boy
Grimm Brothers	The Bremen Town Musicians
Harste, Jerry and Janet Goss	It Didn't Frighten Me
Hawkins, Colin and Jacqui	Old Mother Hubbard
Hill, Eric	Where's Spot?
Hutchins, Pat*	Good-Night Owl
Ivimey, John	Three Blind Mice
Keats, Ezra Jack	Over In The Meadow
Kent, Jack	The Fat Cat
Koontz, Robin	This Old Man: The Counting Song
Kovalski, Maryann	The Wheels on the Bus
Kraus, Robert	Whose Mouse Are You?
Langstaff, John*	Oh, A-Hunting We Will Go
Lexau, Joan M.	I Should Have Stayed In Bed!
McClanahan, Susan*	The Breakfast Buffalo
Martin, Bill, Jr.*	Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What Do You See?
Mayer, Mercer*	Just For You
Moffett, Martha	A Flower Pot Is Not A Hat
Mosel, Arlene	Tikki Tikki Tembo
Peppe, Rodney	The House That Jack Built
Quackenbush, R.*	She'll Be Comin' Round The Mountain
Robart, Rose	The Cake That Mack Ate
Scheer, Jullian and Marvin Bileck*	Rain Makes Applesauce
Sendak, Maurice	Chicken Soup with Rice
Seuling, Barbara	The Teeny Tiny Woman
Shaw, Charles	It Looked Like Spilt Milk
Spier, Peter	The Fox Went Out On A Chilly Night
Stevens, Harry	Fat Mouse
Tolstoy, Alexei	The Great Big Enormous Turnip
Viorst, Judith	Alexander and the Terrible, Horrible, No Good, Very Bad Day
Vipont, Elfrida	The Elephant and the Bad Boy
Wadsworth, Olive	Over in the Meadow
Wildsmith, Brian	The Twelve Days of Christmas
Williams, Linda	The Little Old Lady Who Was Not Afraid of Anything
Zaid, Barry	Chicken Little
Zemach, Margot*	The Teeny Tiny Woman
No Author	Raffi Songs to Read

This father is listening to his daughter practice reading aloud.

PICTURE STORY BOOKS

Picture story books have a structured plot; these books tell a story while a picture book does not. In a picture story the illustrations are such an important part of the story that it can be "read" by the child from the pictures.

Aardema, Verna	Why Mosquitoes Buzz in People's Ears
Adler, David A.	Bunny Rabbit Rebus
Ahlberg, Janet and Allen*	Each Peach Pear Plum
Alexander, Martha	Nobody Asked Me If I Wanted a Baby Sister
Allard, Harry*	It's So Nice to Have A Wolf Around the House
Allen, Pamela*	Mr. Archimedes' Bath
Andersen, Hans C.	Hans Christian Andersen's Fairy Tales
Anno, Mistumasa	Anno's Medieval World
Ardizzone, Edward*	Little Time and the Brave Sea Captain
Armstrong, Jennifer	Hugh Can Do
Barkin, Carol and Elizabeth James	Sometimes I Hate School
Barton, Byron	Building a House
Bemelmans, Ludwig*	Madeline
Bond, Felicia	If You Give a Mouse a Cookie
Briggs, Raymond*	Father Christmas
Brown, Marc*	Arthur's Christmas
Brown, Margaret W.*	The Runaway Bunny
Burningham, John*	Avocado Baby
Burton, Virginia L.*	Mike Mulligan and His Steam Shovel
Caldecott, Randolph	Frog He Would A-Wooing Go
Carle, Eric*	The Very Hungry Caterpillar
Carlstrom, Nancy	Jesse Bear, What Will You Wear?
Chalmers, Mary	Come to the Doctor, Harry
Cohen, Miriam*	First Grade Takes a Test
Cooney, Barbara	Miss Rumphius
Crews, Donald	Freight Train
DeBrunhoff, Jean*	The Story of Babar, the Little Elephant
DePaola, Tomie	Strega Nona
DeRegniers, Beatrice Schenk*	A Little House of Your Own
Dickinson, Mary	Alex and the Baby
Domanska, Janina*	Din Dan Don It's Christmas
Ernst, Lisa	Zinnia and Dot
Ets, Marie Hall*	Gilberto and the Wind
Farber, Norma	Return of the Shadows
Fisher, Aileen*	Going Barefoot
Flack, Marjorie*	The Story About Ping
Fleming, Denise	Lunch
Flourney, Valerie	The Patchwork Quilt
Fox, Mem*	Wilfred Gordon McDonald Partridge
Freeman, Don*	Corduroy
Gag, Wanda	Millions of Cats
Goudey, Alice E.*	The Day We Saw the Sun Come up
Grimm, Brothers*	King Grisly-Beard
Heath, Amy	Sofie's Role
Hughes, Shirley	The Big Alfie Out Of Doors Storybook
Hurwitz, Johanna	Russell and Elisa

"The Very Hungry Caterpillar" is a favorite children's book.

Hutchins, Pat*	Rosie's Walk
Keats, Ezra Jack*	The Snowy Day
Keller, Holly	Island Baby
Kleven, Elisa	The Lion and the Little Red Bird
LeTord, Bijou	The Deep Blue Sea
Lionni, Leo*	Swimmy
Lobel, Anita*	King Rooster, Queen Hen
Lobel, Arnold*	Prince Bertram the Bad
Luenn, Nancy	The Dragon Kite
McClosky, Robert*	Make Way for Ducklings
McDermott, Gerald*	Anansi the Spider
Ness, Evaline*	The Girl and the Goatherd
Oakley, Graham*	The Church Cat Abroad
Oxenbury, Helen*	The Birthday Party
Pilkey, Dav	When Cats Dream
Potter, Beatrix	The Tale of Peter Rabbit
Pragoff, Fiona	Opposites
Provensen, Alice and Martin*	The Glorious Flight
Rice, Eve	Peter's Pockets
Rockwell, Harlow*	My Dentist
Rosen, Michael	We're Going on a Bear Hunt
Rylant, Cynthia	The Relatives Came
Sendak, Maurice*	Where The Wild Things Are
Shannon, George	The Surprise
Shaw, Nancy	Sheep Out to Eat
Schick, Eleanor*	City in the Summer
Sharmat, Marjorie W*	Gladys Told Me to Meet Her Here
Shulevitz, Uri*	Dawn
Sonneborn, Ruth	Friday Night Is Papa Night
Spier, Peter	Noah's Ark
Steig, William*	Doctor De Soto
Steptoe, John	Stevie
Stevenson, James*	The Great Big Especially Beautiful Easter Egg
Van Allsburg, Chris*	The Garden of Abdul Gasazi
Vincent, Gabrielle*	Ernest and Celestine
Waber, Bernard*	Ira Sleeps Over
Watanabe, Shigeo*	What a Good Lunch!
Wells, Rosemary*	Max's Chocolate Chicken
Wildsmith, Brian*	Brian Wildsmith's Circus
Williams, Vera B.	A Chair for My Mother
Zemach, Harv*	Duffy and the Devil
Zolotow, Charlotte*	Do You Know What I'll Do?
Wood, Audrey and Don	The Napping House

FOLKLORE/TRADITIONAL

Aardema, Verna*	Bringing the Rain to Kapiti Plain: A Nandi Tale
Grifalconi, Ann	The Village of Round and Square Houses
Haley, Gail E.	A Story, A Story
Karlin, Barbara	Cinderella
Keats, Ezra Jack*	John Henry
Kellogg, Steven	Chicken Little
Marshall, James	Goldilocks and the Three Bears
Steptoe, John	Mufaro's Beautiful Daughters: An African Tale
Zemach, Margot	The Little Red Hen

DEVELOPING READERS/BEGINNING READERS/5, 6 AND 7 YEAR OLDS

Good books for beginning readers have simple words and brief sentences, repetition, large and clear print and continuous text or short, separate episodes. Common themes are family life, everyday life experiences, school stories, friends, humor, animals, adaptations of folk tales and informational and toy books.

Baker, Betty	Partners
Bang, Molly	Wiley and the Hairy Man
Barrett, Judith	Cloudy with a Chance of Meatballs
Berenstain, Stan and Jan*	Bears on Wheels
Benchley, Nathaniel*	George the Drummer Boy
Bonsall, Crosby*	The Case of the Cat's Meow
Branley, Franklyn	Snow is Falling
Brenner, Barbara	Wagon Wheels
Bunting, Eve*	Winter's Coming
Cherry, Lynne	The Viapok Tree
dePaola, Tomie	The Popcorn Book
Cole, Joanna	The Magic School Bus on the Ocean Floor

deRegniers, Beatrice	So Many Cats
Duvoisin, Roger	Petunia
Eastman, P.D.	Are You My Mother?
Freschet, Berniece	Little Bear Goes for a Walk
Gage, Wilson	Down in the Boondocks
Greenaway, Kate	Under the Window
Griffith, Helen V.	Alex and the Cat
Guilfoile, Elizabeth	Nobody Listens to Andrew
Heyward, DuBose	The Country Bunny and the Little Gold Shoes
Hoban, Lillian*	Arthur's Christmas Cookies
Hoff, Syd	The Horse in Harry's Room
Hutchins, Pat*	The Best Train Set Ever
Jonas, Ann	The 13th Clue
Kessler, Leonard*	Kick, Pass, and Run
Lester, Helen	Me First
Lexau, Joan M.*	The Homework Caper
Lobel, Arnold*	Days with Frog and Toad
Marshall, Edward	Three by the Sea
Marzollo, Jean	Amy Goes Fishing
McGovern, Ann	Stone Soup
McDonald, Megan	The Great Pumpkin Switch
Minarik, Else H.*	Father Bear Comes Home
Parish, Peggy*	Dinosaur Time
Patron, Susan	Five Bad Boys, Billy Que, and the Dustdobbin
Rockwell, Harlow	I Did It
Ross, Pat	M and M and the Bad News Babies
Schwartz, Alvin	There is a Carrot in My Ear
Scieszka, Jon	The Stinky Cheese Man and Other Fairly Stupid Tales
Selsam, Millicent*	Benny's Animals and How He Put Them in Order
Seuss, Dr.*	The Cat in the Hat
Seligson, Susan	Amos Camps Out: A Couch Adventure in the Woods
Sharmat, Marjorie*	Mitchell is Moving
Shaw, Charles G.	It Looked Like Spilt Milk
Shaw, Evelyn	Alligator
Showers, Paul	Look at Your Eyes
Silverman, Erica	Big Pumpkin
Thaler, Michael	Madge's Magic Show
Van Allsburg, Chris*	The Widow's Broom
Wiesner, David	June 29, 1999
Zion, Gene	Harry the Dirty Dog

SERIES

Allard, Harry	Miss Nelson is Missing
Bemelmans, Ludwig	Madeline
Brown, Marc	Arthur's Nose
Carroll, Ruth	Beanie
Cole, Joanna*	The Magic School Bus
Hill, Eric	Where's Spot
Hoban, Russell	Bread and Jam for Frances
Holabird, Katherine	Angelina Ballerina
Lobel, Arnold	Frog and Toad
Marshall, James	George and Martha The Cut Ups
Milne, A.A.	When We Were Very Young
Minarik, Else	Little Bear
Rey, H.A.	Curious George
Sobol, Donald J.	Encyclopedia Brown
Warner, Gertrude C.	The Boxcar Children

INDEPENDENT READERS / 7, 8 AND 9 YEAR OLDS

Adler, David	Cam Jansen and the Mystery of the Stolen Diamonds
Agee, Jon	The Return of Freddy Legrand
Alexander, Lloyd	The Fortune-Tellers
Arnoskey, Jim	Sketching Outdoors In Summer
Berends, Polly	The Case of the Elevator Duck
Berler, Ron	The Super Book of Baseball
Blume, Judy*	Fudge-A-Mania
Buller, Jon	Space Rock
Brimmer, Larry D.	Cory Coleman Grade 2
Bunting, Eve	The Skate Patrol
Calhoun, Mary	The Night the Monster Came
Cameron, Ann	The Stories Julian Tells
Carlson, Natalie S.	The Ghost in the Lagoon
Cattling, Patrick	The Chocolate Touch
Caudill, Rebecca	Did You Carry the Flag Today, Charlie?
Christopher, Matt*	The Spy on Third Base
Corbett, Scott*	The Great McGoniggle's Ghost
Cuyler, Margery	Weird Wolf
Dagliesh, Alice	The Courage of Sarah Noble
Disch, Thomas M.	The Brave Little Toaster
Emberley, Ed	Ed Emberley's Drawing Book: Make a World
Estes, Eleanor	The Hundred Dresses
Etra, Jonathan	Aliens for Breakfast
Friedman, Ira R.	How My Parents Learned To Eat
Gannett, Ruth S.	My Father's Dragon
George, Jean C.	The Wounded Wold
Gerrard, Roy	Jocasta Carr, Movie Starr
Giff, Patricia R.*	The Beast in Ms. Rooney's Room
Heide, Florence P.	Fables You Shouldn't Pay Any Attention To
Henry, Marguerite	Misty of Chincoteague
Hoban, Russell	Dinner at Alberta's
Honeycutt, Natalie	Juliet Fisher and the Foolproof Plan
Hornblow, Leonora	Animals Do the Strangest Things
Hurwitz, Johanna*	Rip-Roaring Russell
Kimmel, Eric	The Spotted Pony
Kline, Suzy	Herbie Jones
Leaf, Munro	The Story of Ferdinand
Le Guin, Ursula	A Ride on the Red Mare's Back
Levy, Elizabeth*	Dracula is a Pain in the Neck
Markle, Sandra	Exploring Summer
Marzollo, Jean	The Pizza Pie Slugger
McCully, Emily	Mirette on the High Wire

McKissack, Patricia	The Dark Thirty
Miles, Miska	Annie and the Old One
New England	Dive to the Coral Reefs Aquarium
O'Connor, Jim	The Ghost in Tent 19
Patent, Dorothy H.	The Way of the Grizzly
Pinkwater, Daniel*	Fat Men From Space
Pinkwater, Manus	Big Orange Splot
Prelutsky, Jack*	New Kid On the Block
Quackenbush, Robert*	Detective Mole
Ringgold, Faith	Aunt Harriet's Underground Railroad
Robinson, Nancy K.	Just Plain Cat
Rockwell, Thomas	How to Eat Fried Worms
Rogers, Jean*	Raymond's Best Summer
Rothman, Joel	1000 Howlers for Kids
San Sauci, Robert D.	The Talking Eggs
Say, Allen	El Chino
Schweitzer, Byrd B.	One Small Blue Bead
Scieszka, Jon*	Knight of the Kitchen Table
Seuss, Dr.*	The Sneetches
Sharmat, Marjorie	Nate the Great
Shulevitz, Uri	Dawn
Slobodkin, Florence	Sarah Somebody
Smith, Janice Lee	The Monster in the Third Dresser Drawer and Other Stories About Adam Joshua
Steele, Mary Q.	Anna's Summer Songs
Steptoe, John*	Stevie
Tashima, Taro	Crow Boy
Taylor, Sydney	All-of-a-Kind Family
Tregarthen, Enys	The Doll Who Came Alive
Turkle, Brinton	Thy Friend, Obadiah
Wallace, Bill	Snot Stew
Webster, Harriet	Going Places
Williams, Jay	Everyone Knows What a Dragon Looks Like
Williams, Vera	Stringbean's Trip to the Shining Sea
Yolen, Jane	Letting Swift River Go
Zamach, Harve	Duffy and the Devil
Ziefert, Harriet	Worm Day

PRIMARY SCHOOL CLASSICS AND SERIES

Admonson, Joy	Born Free
Aesop	Fables
Alcott,Louisa M*	Little Women
Andersen, Hans Christian*	Fairy Tales
Atwater, Richard	Mr. Popper's Penguins and Florence
Bailey, Carolyn S.	Miss Hickory
Barrie, J.M.	Peter Pan
Baum, L. Frank*	The Wonderful World of Oz
Bond, Michael	A Bear Called Paddington
Boston, L.M.	The Children of Green Knowe
Brink, Carol Ryrie	Caddie Woodlawn
Brunhoff, Jean de	The Story of Babar
Burnett, Frances H.	The Secret Garden
Burton, Virginia L.	Mike Mulligan and His Steam Shovel
Butterworth, Oliver	The Enormous Egg
Christian, Mary B.	Sebastian (Supersleuth) and the Crummy Yummies Caper

Clark, Ann Nolan	Secret of the Andes
Cleary, Beverly*	Henry Huggins
Coatsworth, Elizabeth	The Cat Who Went to Heaven
Coren, Alan	The Lone Arthur
Dalgliesh, Alice*	The Bears on Hemlock Mountain
De Angeli, Marguerite	The Door in the Wall
De Jong, Meindert*	The House of Sixty Fathers
Grimm, Brothers*	Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs
Hill, Elizabeth S.	Evan's Corner
Kipling, Rudyard*	The Elephant's Child
Kubinyi, Laszlo	Zeki and the Talking Cat Shukru
Lindgren, Astrid*	Pippi Longstocking
Lofting, Hugh*	Doctor Doolittle
London, Jack*	The Call of the Wild
MacDonald, Betty	Mrs. Piggle-Wiggle
MacGregor, Ellen*	Miss Pickerell
McSwigan, Marie	Snow Treasure
Meigs, Cornelia	Invincible Louisa
Minarik, Else H.*	Little Bear
Montgomery, L.M.*	Anne of Green Gables
Mukerji, Dhan G.	Gay-Neck, the Story of a Pigeon
Norton, Mary*	The Borrowers
O'Hara, Mary	My Friend Flicka
Pearce, Philippa	Tom's Midnight Garden
Perrault, Charles	Cinderella
Pyle, Howard	The Merry Adventures of Robin Hood
Richter, Conrad	The Light in the Forest
Rounds, Glen	Mr. Yowder and the Lion Roar Capsules
Seldon, George	The Cricket in Times Square
Sewell, Anna	Black Beauty
Sobol, Donald J.*	Encyclopedia Brown
Sorenson, Virginia	Miracles on Maple Hill
White, E.B.	Charlotte's Web
Wilder, Laura I.	Little House in the Big Woods

INTERMEDIATE READERS / 9 YEAR OLDS+

Alexander, Lloyd*	The Book of Three
Armstrong, Sperry	Call It Courage
Armstrong, Wm H.	Sounder
Avi	Something Upstairs: A Tale of Ghosts
Babbitt, Natalie	Tuck Everlasting
Banks, Lynn*	Indian in the Cupboard
Barrie, J.M.	Peter Pan
Bauer, Marion Dane	On My Honor
Behn, Harry	Crickets and Bullfrogs and Whispers of Thunder: Poems and Pictures
Bellairs, John*	The House with a Clock in Its Walls
Benson, Sally	Stories of the Gods and Heroes
Bertol, Roland	Sundiata: The Epic of the Lion King
Bethancourt, T. Ernesto	The Dog Days of Arthur Cane
Bierhorst, John	Doctor Coyote: A Native American Aesop's Fables
Blume, Judy*	Tales of a Fourth Grade Nothing
Brink, Carol Ryrie	Caddie Woodlawn
Burch, Robert*	Ida Early Comes Over the Mountain
Burnett, Frances	The Secret Garden
Byars, Betsy*	The Burning Questions of Bingo Brown

Callen, Larry	Who Kidnapped the Sheriff?: Tales From Tickfaw
Cameron, Eleanor*	The Wonderful Flight to the Mushroom Planet
Carris, Joan	The Greatest Idea Ever
Carroll, Lewis	Alice's Adventures in Wonderland
Christopher, John*	The White Mountains
Cleary, Beverly*	The Mouse and the Motorcycle
Clements, Bruce	The Treasure of Plunderell Manor
Clifford, Eth	Harvey's Horrible Snake Disaster
Climo, Shirley	T.J. Ghost
Cole, Joanna	A New Treasury of Children's Poetry: Old Favorites and New Discoveries
Conly, Jane	Racso and the Rats of NIMH
Conrad, Pam*	My Daniel
Cooper, Susan*	The Dark is Rising
Dahl, Roald*	James and the Giant Peach
Davis, Jenny*	Good-bye and Keep Cold
Declements, Barthe*	Nothing's Fair in Fifth Grade
DeJong, Meindert	Hurry Home Candy
Duder, Tessa	In Lane Three, Alex Archer
Elish, Dan*	The World-Wide Dessert Contest
Farley, Walter	The Black Stallion
Feagles, Anita	Thor and the Giants
Field, Rachel	Hitty Her First Hundred Years
Fitzgerald, John D.*	The Great Brain
Fitzhugh, Louise	Harriet the Spy
Fleischman, Sid	The Whipping Boy
Forbes, Esther	Johnny Tremain
Fox, Paula	The Slave Dancer
Freedman, Russell	Lincoln: A Photobiography
Fritz, Jean*	And Then What Happened, Paul Revere?
Frost, Robert	A Swinger of Birches: Poems of Robert Frost for Young People
George, Jean C.*	My Side Of the Mountain
Gilson, Jamie	Do Bananas Chew Gum?
Gipson, Red	Old Yeller
Giff, Patricia R.*	The Winter Worm Business
Gilson, Jamie	Thirteen Ways to Sink a Sub
Grahame, Kenneth	The Wind in the Willows
Greer, Gary	Max and Me and the Time Machine
Gregory, Kristiana	The Legend of Jimmy Spoon
Hahn, Mary D.	Wait Till Helen Comes: a Ghost Story
Hamilton, Edith	Mythology
Hamilton, Virginia	The People Could Fly: American Black Folk Tales
Haugaard, Erik C.	Hakon of Rogen's Saga
Henry, Marguerite*	Misty of Chincoteague
Hicks, Clifford*	Alvin Fernald, Superweasel
Hildick, E.W.	The Case of the Muttering Mummy
Holman, Felice	At the Top of My Voice and Other Poems
Howe, James*	Howliday Inn
Hughes, Dean	Nutty for President
Hughes, Shirley	Here Comes Charlie Moon
Hurwitz, Johanna*	Aldo Applesauce
Jacques, Brian	Redwall
Jobb, Jamie	The Night Sky Book
Jones, Diana W.	Eight Days of Luke
Juster, Norton	The Phantom Tollbooth
Kelly, Eric	The Trumpeter of Krakow
Key, Alexander	The Forgotten Door
King-Smith, Dick*	Harry's Mad

Knight, Eric	Lassie Come Home
Konigsburg, E.L.	From the Mixed-Up Files of Mrs. Basil E. Frankweiler
Lamb, Charles and Mary	Tales from Shakespeare
Lang, Andrew*	The Rainbow Fairy Books
L'Engle, Madeline*	A Wrinkle in Time
Lester, Julius	How Many Spots Does a Leopard Have? and Other Tales
Lewis, C.S.*	The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe
Lister, Robin	The Legend of King Arthur
Little, Jean	Little by Little
Lofting, Hugh*	The Story of Doctor Dolittle
London, Jack	The Call of the Wild
Lord, Bette	In the Year of the Board and Jackie Robinson
Lowry, Lois*	Number the Stars
Lyon, George Ella*	Borrowed Children
Macauley, David	Castle and Cathedral
MacLachlan, Patricia	The Facts and Fictions of Minna Pratt
McCloskey, Robert	Homer Price
McClung, Robert M.	Hugh Glass, Mountain Man
McCormick, Dell J.	Paul Bunyan Swings His Axe
McGowen, Tom	The Magician's Apprentice
McHugh, Elizabet	Beethoven's Cat
McKillip, Patricia A.	The House on Parchment Street
McSwigan, Marie	Snow Treasure
Mahy, Margaret	The Haunting
Masters, Susan R.	The Secret Life of Hubie Hartzel
Merrill, Jean	The Pushcart War
Miles, Betty	The Secret Life of the Underwear Champ
Milne, A. A.	Winnie the Pooh
Nelson, Theresa	Devil Storm
Neville, Emily C.	Berries Goodman
North, Sterling	Rascal
Norton, Mary*	The Borrowers
Nostlinger, Chris	Konrad
O'Brien, Robert	Mrs. Frisby and the Rats of NIMH
O'Connell, Jean S.	The Dollhouse Caper
O'Dell, Scott	Island of the Blue Dolphin
O'Neill, Mary	Hailstones and Halibut Bones
Paige, Harry W.	Shadow on the Sun
Park, Barbara	Operation Dump the Chump
Paterson, Katherine*	Bridge to Terabithia
Paulsen, Gary*	Hatchet
Pearce, Phillippa	Tom's Midnight Garden
Peare, Catherine O.	The Helen Keller Story
Peck, Robert N.*	Soup
Peck, Sylvia	Seal Child
Peet, Bill	Bill Peet: An Autobiography
Poe, Edgar Allan*	Tales of Mystery and Imagination
Prelutsky, Jack	Something Big Has Been Here
Pyle, Howard*	The Story of King Arthur and His Knights
Pevsner, Stella	Me, My Goat and My Sister's Wedding
Raskin, Ellen*	The Mysterious Disappearance of Leon (I MEAN Noel)
Rawls, Wilson	Where the Red Fern Grows
Reid Banks, Lynne*	The Indian in the Cupboard
Roberts, Willo	The View from the Cherry Tree
Robertson, Keith*	Henry Reed, Inc.
Rodgers, Mary	Freaky Friday
Rogers, Mary	Summer Switch

Sacher, Louis*	The Boy Who Lost His Face
Salten, Felix	Bambi
Sandburg, Carl*	Rootabaga Stories
Selden, George*	The Cricket in Times Square
Sewell, Anna	Black Beauty
Sharp, Margery*	The Rescuers
Shaw, Murray	Match Wits With Sherlock Holmes
Shemin, Margaretha	The Little Riders
Silverstein, Shel	Where the Sidewalk Ends
Singer, Isaac B.*	A Day of Pleasure: Stories of a Boy Growing up in Warsaw
Sleator, William	Blackbriar
Smith, Robert	Jelly Belly
Speare, Elizabeth George*	The Sign of the Beaver
Sperry, Armstrong	Call it Courage
Spyri, Johanna	Heidi
Steig, William*	Abel's Island
Stevenson, R.L.*	Treasure Island
Stolz, Mary	Cat Walk
Stoutenburg, Adrien	American Tall-Tale Animals
Switzer, Ellen	The Nutcracker: A Story and a Ballet
Taylor, Mildred	Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry
Taylor, Sydney	All of a Kind Family
Taylor, Theodore	The Cay
Tolkien, J.R.R.*	The Hobbit
Tomes, Margot	Where Was Patrick Henry on the 29th of May?
Travers, P.L.	Mary Poppins
Twain, Mark	The Adventures of Tom Sawyer
Ullman, James R.	Banner in the Sky
Voigt, Cynthia*	Homecoming
Warner, Gertrude C.	The Boxcar Children
White, E.B.	Stuart Little
Williams, Jay	Danny Dunn and the Homework Machine
Wisler, G. Clifton	Red Cap
Wojciechowski, Maya	Shadow of a Bull
Wright, Betty Ren	Christina's Ghost
Wyss, Johann	Swiss Family Robinson
Yep, Lawrence	Dragon Wings

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BOOKS FOR PARENTS

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Chapter 7

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT PRIMARY SCHOOL

Photo by Jamie Bloomfield

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT PRIMARY SCHOOLS

Parents with primary school-aged children have many questions about whether their children will learn what they need to know and master the skills they will need for fourth grade and beyond. It is natural to be skeptical of "new" programs involving our children's education. It is reassuring to know that most parents are enthused about primary school once they fully understand it and see it in action.

It is also important for parents to understand the how's and why's of primary school so they can be helpful as partners in the education of their children. It is easier for parents to know how to help at home and at school if they understand what is intended and what should be happening in primary classrooms.

These questions have been asked by real parents, whose children are in or will be enrolled in primary programs soon. You may have additional questions. There are several places to go for more information.

1. Talk with your child's teacher or principal.
2. Call the Kentucky Department of Education, 1-800-KDE-KERA.
3. Call The Prichard Committee and The Partnership for Kentucky School Reform, 1-800-928-2111.
4. Check the resource list for parents on page 76 for suggested reading on the education of young children.

Q: Why is it necessary for schools to change?

A: In the past 50 years, major changes have taken place in business and industry. Employees are expected to:

1. be computer literate;
2. work cooperatively with others to develop proposals, solve problems and produce and market products;
3. prepare major presentations for colleagues and customers;
4. communicate positively and productively in telephone and face-to-face situations;
5. be self directed and task oriented; and
6. interact in a confident, competent manner when performing job related tasks.

Schools have changed little in the past 50 years. Someone has quipped that if Rip VanWinkle woke up today, the only place he would find familiar would be the classroom!

In primary school, beginning at age five, children will:

1. use computers;
2. work in groups to solve problems and complete projects;
3. present orally book reports, results of science experiments, theme projects, plays and puppet shows;
4. confer with the teacher and with classmates on learning activities and goals, explain and describe how something works or how answers were derived, give directions and steps for completing tasks;
5. be self directed when reading silently and completing projects;
6. learn in an environment where high standards are established and children are treated with dignity and respect because it is expected that they will learn at their own rate and pace so that mastery is accomplished. Children feel confident and competent to make and correct mistakes and take risks in order to ensure successful performance.

Schools must change in order to prepare students to be successful life long learners who are confident, competent and happy in their chosen professions.

Q: How many years does a child spend in the primary program?

A: Most children will spend four years in the primary program. Some children will benefit from an additional year. A very few may be ready for fourth grade after three years. This decision will be made carefully with family involvement, based on development in all areas -- social, emotional, physical, aesthetic, as well as academic readiness.

Q: Can schools decide not to include 5-year-old children (kindergartners) from the primary school program?

A: The law requires that all children from the time they enter school until they enter fourth grade be a part of the primary school. Each school can decide the best way to group students to help them work to meet the learning goals.

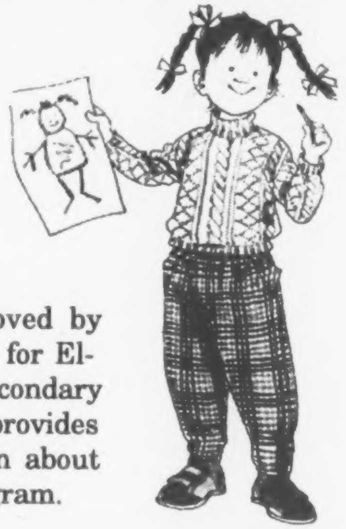
The Kentucky Department of Education has suggested that schools can mix two or more age groups, so 5-year-old students could be blended with 6-year-olds, or with 6- and 7-, or 6-, 7- and 8-year-olds.

The Department has also suggested that some but certainly not all 5-year-olds may need to be grouped together for the first semester to get accustomed to school. During the second semester all 5-year-olds must be blended with other primary children at least two times each week.

It is important to remember that the primary program is intended to help students work at their own pace. That means that schools must meet the needs of 5-year-olds who are getting used to a classroom environment and those who might come to school already reading. Those who are ready will be able to work with older primary children and not be held back.

Teachers who have had 5-year-old students in class with older students report that the 5-year-olds are making much more progress than teachers ever thought possible because they see older students reading, writing and/or problem solving.

For more information: "State Regulations and Recommended Best Practices for Kentucky's Primary Program 1993-94," available from The Department of Education (1-800-KDE-KERA), is a document approved by the State Board for Elementary and Secondary Education and provides clear information about the primary program.



Q: How will primary programs be monitored?

A: In 1992, all elementary schools prepared and sent their plan for implementing the primary program to the Department of Education for review. An action improvement plan must be submitted to the Department of Education every year. Also, the Kentucky Education Reform Act of 1990 includes an accountability system whereby each school is assessed, given a baseline score and required to increase that score every two years. If schools do very well, the teachers can receive financial rewards. If schools are not helping more and more students master the learning goals, they will receive help from Kentucky State Department consultants and if they do poorly enough, could become a "school in crisis," where poor teachers and administrators can be dismissed. Schools have many reasons to do the best job possible.

Q: My child compares the checks on progress reports to As, Bs and Cs and thinks s/he is doing poorly. How do I know s/he is doing as well as possible and how can I explain that to my child?

A: Many children currently enrolled in primary programs have experienced As, Bs and Cs and will naturally make comparisons. As children experience only the new progress reports, this will not be a problem. Primary programs emphasize helping young students learn and master the necessary skills and concepts on an individual basis without comparison or competition with other children. There is plenty of opportunity for competition when they reach older grades. Children should learn how to reach goals and achieve high standards before they are placed in competitive situations. It is important for young children to have realistic goals set for them, to master those goals and have new ones, building success on success, while gaining a solid mastery of the basic skills needed for fourth grade and beyond. It is important for your child to understand that all children are different and will reach different goals at different times.

Q: Why do report cards have to be different?

A: Report cards compare one child against another. Grades are vague; an "A" in reading in one teacher's class may be a "B" or lower in another class depending on what skills and concepts the teacher is basing the grade. The primary progress report compares the child's work against a standard, describes progress in specific skills, concepts and understandings and provides written comments. A tremendous amount of information is thereby communicated to families.

Q: How will I know how my child is doing?

A: Ask your child's teacher. Progress reports will list the goals for all children. Ask the teacher to help you understand your child's report. Attend parent/teacher conferences on a regular basis to find out what progress your child is making. Ask to see your child's learning profile/portfolio so you can see his/her written work and understand the progress being made. Ask your child to write things for you or read to you throughout the school year so you can determine progress first hand. Ask your child about things s/he is learning in school.

Q: How will I know my child who would have been in third grade will be challenged enough if she/he is in the same classroom as the younger students?

A: Ask your child's teacher what learning expectations have been set for your child and how you will know if they are being met. The reason for primary school is to ensure that all children are challenged to reach their highest potential. Teachers can challenge older students by providing more difficult projects for them on class themes that require high level learning and skills development. For example, older students might write and produce a play based on a study of "New Beginnings," or do a research project, while younger students develop their writing skills. Older students will also benefit from occasionally helping younger students. Teachers and school councils in each school will decide how to group children to best help all children learn. They can group first through fourth year students together or they can group as few as two age groups together, and they can change their plans if they believe another way will work better.

Q: How and who will decide whether students are ready to move to fourth grade?

A: Teachers will use criteria set forth by the Kentucky Department of Education to determine successful completion of primary. Decisions will be made by the team of teachers who are working with the child and in partnership with the family. Together they will assess the progress being made through authentic assessment methods. See Kentucky Regulations, 703 KAR 4:040 in Appendix B.

Q: What will happen to children whose performance doesn't meet the verification methods for successful completion of primary?

A: Children who need additional support are given such in the primary program through reinforcement programs, special education and extended school programs. There is no longer an emphasis upon age, grade, or completion of textbooks; rather, consideration is given to children's abilities to apply concepts and skills, to become self-sufficient thinkers and to solve problems. Children who develop these abilities slowly will be given another year, without the stigma of retention or failure, to benefit from continuously progressing toward mastery.

Q: How will children adapt to the intermediate grades (4-6)?

The learning goals and outcomes for all Kentucky students are the basis for making decisions for effective learning at any level. The concepts of continuous progress and developmentally appropriate practice are as applicable at the intermediate level as they are at the primary level and many schools may choose to use the "primary" concept for intermediate grades. As primary students with higher level skills enter 4th grade intermediate teachers will need to change their instruction so that these students will not be bored.

Q: How can I be sure my child is learning what is needed to advance to intermediate grades if we must move to another school district?

A: All Kentucky teachers use the learning goals and student outcomes to determine what is important for young children to know and be able to do. The verification methods for successful completion of primary are based on these outcomes. See Kentucky Regulations, 703 KAR 4:040 in Appendix B.

Q: Why aren't teachers focusing on correct spelling and grammar from the very beginning? I'm afraid my child will be a poor writer and speller.

A: In the past there was a lot of emphasis on correct spelling and grammar from the very beginning, and children were less likely to feel free to get their often complex ideas down on paper. The focus has changed so that children are encouraged to get their ideas on paper first, using "invented spelling" or phonic sounds to spell words. They make corrections later. Spelling and grammar are not ignored, but follow as children understand that, in order for others to enjoy their writing, spelling and punctuation must be correct.

Q: How will we know children aren't missing content and skills?

A: Subjects are integrated, where appropriate, into broad themes and topics. Using Kentucky's learning goals and student outcomes, teachers organize curriculum in such a way that appropriate content and skills are introduced and developed through the themes or topics. For example, using the topic "apples" a class could read about Johnny Appleseed, write and produce a play about him for art class, map his travels as a geography lesson, write stories about apples for writing, cut apples into pieces to learn about fractions and plant appleseeds for science. Talk to your child's teacher and ask what the goals are for the students and if there are content and skill areas that students might miss.

Q: Will older children spend all of their time "teaching" younger children?

A: All children at some time will help other children. That may be as simple as helping another student find out how to spell a word or understand a math problem or as complicated as preparing a report and "sharing it" or teaching the rest of the class. This is a natural part of the learning experience. It does not mean that advanced students spend their time "teaching" other children. All children must be challenged and continue to learn and expand on their knowledge and skills. Think about how you learn best. Sometimes one learns best by teaching others.

Q: How will self-esteem really be addressed?

A: In the primary school, the whole child is considered as the major focus. Academic, social, emotional, creative and physical development are all of significant importance. Children are successful, when they are comfortable in knowing that they won't be criticized. When risk of failure is not prevalent, they can reach the high expectations set for them. Dignity and respect for children are essential parts of primary school.

Q: What about discipline in these classrooms?

A: High standards and expectations for responsible behavior are as important in primary classes as in traditional classes. A teacher who is a strong manager in a graded classroom will be the same in a multiage, nongraded one. There is a major emphasis on the child learning to be self-directed and assuming responsibility for his/her own behavior and learning. Morale and self esteem are higher in such a group because the basis for contention, rivalry and competition with the rest of the class is largely removed by children working to meet high standards and operating in cooperative learning groups. Discipline is much better in multiage groups where children are immersed in challenging, motivating learning experiences when they look to older children as role models or where they are the role models for younger children.

Q: What about undesirable social behaviors when older children are with the younger ones?

A: There are no guarantees that younger children will not learn bad habits from older children or children their own age in any classroom. However, greater social growth takes place when there is a wider age range. Older children become more responsible and children who are challenged and enjoy being in school are less likely to set poor examples. If your child brings home bad habits, it is important that you communicate your concerns to the teacher and work with your child to understand your expectations, just as you would if your child were in a traditional classroom.

Q: How are computers used?

A: Computers can be found in most schools throughout Kentucky as part of the mandates of KERA. Children will have access to computers in classrooms and/or in computer laboratories. Computers are used to enhance curriculum as a tool supplementing classroom instruction and stimulating the academic capabilities of children. Computers are often used to increase skills in reading, language and mathematics and allow children to progress at their own pace.

Q: Are there any limitations on learning in any area of instruction?

A: None whatsoever in multiage, multigrade classes; the sky is the limit.

Q: Why does the law require multiage or mixed age classrooms?

A: Children grow in spurts and at different rates. By removing retention and promotion, children continually progress so that when a growth spurt occurs the child is not hindered by already having been retained or by finishing the work at a grade level early and not being allowed to move on.

Q: Are teachers prepared to teach in this new program?

A: Most elementary school teachers have knowledge about the concepts of the primary program, but many were not prepared in college to use all of these concepts at the same time. Teachers are learning through in-service programs, visits to other schools and classrooms that have implemented the primary program, reading and research. School districts have the option to add five additional days of professional development during 1992-93 and 1993-94 to ensure that teachers are properly trained. The Department of Education strongly endorses that districts take advantage of these additional days. Most colleges of education are also changing their elementary teaching programs to prepare new teachers for the primary program. Teachers are spending a lot of time and energy learning and trying new things. Parents can help by understanding how difficult it is, by volunteering to prepare some of the many hands-on materials, and by letting teachers know how their child is reacting to the changes whether they be new and exciting or problems that need to be addressed. The primary program is working in classrooms throughout Kentucky. Parents and teachers will need to work together to ensure that all children have the opportunity to benefit from this program that is based on research outlining how young children learn best.

Q: What if my child's teacher just doesn't want to change to the primary program?

A: Kentucky law says that all children will be in the "primary program" from the time they enter school until they move into fourth grade and that the primary program will include developmentally appropriate practices, multiage and multiability classrooms, continuous progress, authentic assessment, qualitative reporting methods, professional teamwork and positive parent involvement. Teachers have flexibility and can use their best judgment in how they implement these attributes. The key is that they help students master basic skills, concepts and understandings and be prepared for fourth grade. If you believe your child's teacher is completely ignoring the law, ask the teacher how s/he is planning to implement the primary program, talk with the principal or if necessary, call the State Department of Education for guidance at 1-800-KDE-KERA.

Q: How are children with special needs such as learning disorders or handicapping conditions served?

A: Children with special needs requiring remedial or special education programs are served in a variety of ways, depending on the type of instruction required. Program options for these children include team teaching, mentoring, collaborative teaching and consultation and time in a resource room. Because the primary program is organized around the developmental needs of the children, the need for pullout programs is reduced. The type of program option provided is based on the unique characteristics and needs of each child. Several options may be made available. For example, a child may receive special instruction within the classroom at certain times and visit a resource room at other times. Special education teachers may be assigned to a regular classroom with their students.

Q: How will the needs of gifted students be met?

A: In the primary program children will advance as far and as quickly as is developmentally and academically appropriate. It is important that they develop socially and emotionally as well in order to be successful in a world that depends more and more on communication. By learning to work cooperatively, as well as independently, the important needs of the whole child will be met. Teachers will work cooperatively with resource teachers to provide quality instruction and challenging assignments. These students will no longer complete work sheet after work sheet on skills they have already mastered.

Q: I've heard that the "open classroom" concept is just the same as the primary program and it failed to work in the 1970s. Why are we going back to a "failed" program?

A: The open classroom failed because:

1. Teachers had to develop all the curriculum and instructional strategies themselves. Today, numerous excellent programs and strategies are available for teachers to use as resources.

2. Teachers did not understand how to flexibly group children so that they could learn at their own rate and pace. Instead they had as many as six ability groups in the room. The teacher's time was then spread too thin to be effective.
3. Teachers graded all papers and took the responsibility for pointing out all mistakes. Today children are given the dignity of completing first drafts, receiving feedback from teachers and peers and then self-correcting so that teachers evaluate final drafts.
4. Parents were not brought in as partners in their child's learning program.

Q: What happens if the primary program fails?

A: The primary is already succeeding in schools, provinces and countries internationally. The Kentucky legislature has already insisted and families must insist that all schools prepare their teachers to implement the primary program in successful ways.

Q: Why don't we just go back to traditional teaching? Traditional magnet programs seem to be doing well.

A: Research about how young children learn indicates that the critical attributes outlined in the law on primary programs are more effective in helping young children learn. In multiage settings both the floor and the ceiling in terms of achievement are raised so that children may experience every opportunity for success. If five years are required to complete primary, children will continuously progress without the stigma of being retained. Those who develop early will continue to be challenged.

Q: Isn't this Montessori?

A: Many of the concepts are very similar to Montessori methods, but this is not a true Montessori program. Teachers are free to use Montessori methods if they believe that will work best for the students in their classrooms or schools.

Q: Is there any research that shows that primary schools work or are we experimenting with our children?

A: An article by Barbara Nelson Pavan entitled "The Benefits of Nongraded Schools," in the October 1992 journal, Educational Leadership, reviewed 64 research studies on nongraded, continuous progress and multiage classrooms published between 1968 and 1990. The results showed:

1. When graded and nongraded schools were compared, the studies showed a consistent pattern favoring nongradedness.
2. The nongraded groups performed better (58 percent) or as well as (33 percent) the graded groups on measures of academic achievement.
3. On mental health and school attitudes, 52 percent of the studies indicated nongraded schools as better for students, 43 percent similar. Only 5 percent showed nongraded as worse.
4. The benefits to students of nongradedness increase as students have longer nongraded experiences.
5. African Americans, boys, low socioeconomic level students, and underachievers benefit from a nongraded program.

In The Case for Mixed-Age Grouping in Early Education, Lillian Katz cites research that significantly supports primary programs.

Q: Where else is the primary school program being used?

A: Other elementary schools across the country using the primary school include:

Accelerated Schools Project, Stanford University, Stanford, CA
Alcoa Elementary School, Alcoa, TN
Bank Street Model School, Columbia University, New York, NY
Benjamin Jepson Nongraded Magnet School, New Haven, CT
Chestnut Hill Community School, Belchertown, MA
China Grove Elementary School, China Grove, NC
Eagle Valley Elementary School, Eagle Valley, CO
Key School, Indianapolis, IN
UCLA Laboratory School, University of California, Los Angeles, CA
Wickliffe Elementary School, Upper Arlington, OH

Other countries use this approach including the Province of British Columbia in Canada, Great Britain and New Zealand.

APPENDICES

Photo by Rick McComb

APPENDIX A

Kentucky Law on Primary School

Kentucky Revised Statutes (KRS) are the state laws passed by the Kentucky legislature. The laws about the primary school program are as follows:

KRS 158.030. "Common school" and "primary school program" defined – Who may attend. – (1) "Common school" means an elementary or secondary school of the state supported in whole or in part by public taxation. No school shall be deemed a "common school" or receive support from public taxation unless the school is taught by a certified teacher for a minimum school term as defined by KRS 158.070 and every child residing in the district who satisfies the age requirements of this section has had the privilege of attending it. Provided, however, that any child who is six (6) years of age, or who may become six (6) years of age by October 1, shall attend public school or qualify for an exemption as provided by KRS 159.030. Any child who is five (5) years of age, or who may become five (5) years of age by October 1, may enter a primary school program, as defined in subsection (2) of this section.

(2) "Primary school program" means that part of the elementary school program in which children are enrolled from the time they begin school until they are ready to enter the fourth grade. Notwithstanding any statute to the contrary, successful completion of the primary school program shall be a prerequisite for a child's entrance into fourth grade. The State Board for Elementary and Secondary Education shall establish, by regulation, methods of verifying successful completion of the primary school program pursuant to the goals of education as described in Section 3 of KRS 158.6451.

KRS 156.160. Promulgation of administrative regulations by State Board for Elementary and Secondary Education. -- (1) The State Board for Elementary and Secondary Education shall promulgate administrative regulations establishing standards which school districts shall meet in student, program, service, and operational performance. These regulations shall comply with the expected outcomes for students and schools set forth in KRS 158.6451. Administrative regulations shall be promulgated for the following:

(a) Courses of study for the different grades and kinds of common schools, including procedures for developing an ungraded primary program as defined in KRS 158.030 which shall be implemented by the beginning of the 1992-93 school year, and the program, in its entirety, shall be fully implemented for all students who have not entered the fourth grade in every elementary school in every district by the beginning of the 1993-1994 school year. The primary program shall include the following critical attributes: developmentally appropriate educational practices, multiage and multiability classrooms; continuous progress; authentic assessment; qualitative reporting methods; professional teamwork; and positive parent involvement. The implementation of the primary program may take into consideration the necessary arrangements required for students attending part-time.

APPENDIX B

Kentucky Regulations on Primary School

Kentucky Administrative Regulations (KAR) about education are adopted by the Kentucky Board for Elementary and Secondary Education to clarify the law. The regulations about the primary school program are as follows.

704 KAR 3:440. Primary school program guidelines.
RELATES TO: KRS 156.160(1)(a)
STATUTORY AUTHORITY: KRS 156.070, 156.160(1)(a), 158.030(1)
NECESSITY AND FUNCTION: KRS 156.160(1)(a) requires the State Board for Elementary and Secondary Education to establish by regulation the standards that school districts shall meet in student, program service, and operational performance. KRS 158.030 establishes the primary school program and requires the promulgation of regulations to address methods for verifying successful completion of the primary school program.

Section 1. Definitions. The following definitions shall apply to this administrative regulation:

(1) "Developmentally appropriate practices" means instructional practices that address the physical, aesthetic, cognitive, emotional and social domains of children and that permit them to progress through an integrated curriculum according to their unique learning needs.

(2) "Multiage and multiability classrooms" means flexible grouping and regrouping of children of different age, sex and ability who may be assigned to the same teacher(s) for more than one (1) year.

(3) "Continuous progress" means a student's unique progression through the primary school program at his own rate without comparison to the rate of others or consideration of the number of years in school. Retention and promotion with the primary school program are not compatible with continuous progress.

(4) "Authentic assessment" means assessment that occurs continually in the context of the learning environment and reflects actual learning experiences that can be documented through observation, anecdotal records, journals, logs, actual work samples, conferences and other methods.

(5) "Qualitative reporting methods" means progress is communicated through a variety of home-school communiques, which address the growth and development of the whole child as he progresses through the primary school program.

(6) "Professional teamwork" means all professional staff in the primary school program communicate and plan on a regular basis and use a variety of instructional delivery systems such as team teaching and collaborative teaching.

(7) "Positive parent involvement" means the establishment of productive relationships between the school and the home, individuals, or groups that enhance communication, promote understanding and increase opportunities for children to experience success in the primary school program.

Section 2. Primary School Program Attributes. Each primary school program shall include all the following attributes:

(1) Developmentally appropriate education practices;

(2) Multiage and multiability classrooms;
(3) Continuous progress;
(4) Authentic assessment;
(5) Qualitative reporting methods;
(6) Professional teamwork; and
(7) Positive parent involvement.

Section 3. Students in the Primary School Program.

(1) Children who attend the primary school program shall not be described as enrolled in a specific grade level. Students who transfer from a school system that uses grade levels of kindergarten through third grade shall be enrolled in the primary school program and placed according to their developmental needs.

(2) Each elementary school shall design the primary school program to address the learning needs of all children who meet the entry age for the primary school program and who are not ready to enter the fourth grade. Individual placement decisions for children who are eligible for special education and related services shall be determined by the appropriate admissions and release committee, pursuant to 707 KAR 1:051.

Section 4. Curriculum.

(1) The curriculum of the primary school program shall address the goals of education and the model curriculum framework set forth in KRS 158.6451.

(2) Instructional practices in the primary school program shall motivate and nurture children of diverse cultures; shall address the social, emotional, physical, aesthetic and cognitive needs of children; and shall be based upon the following principles of how young children learn:

  (a) Young children learn at different rates and through different styles.

  (b) Young children learn as they develop a sense of self-confidence in a positive learning environment.

  (c) Young children learn best with "hands on" experiences where they are encouraged to question, explore and discover.

  (d) Young children learn best through an integrated curriculum by engaging in real-life activities and learning centers.

  (e) Young children learn best in a social environment where they can converse with others to expand their language and their thinking.

(3) Students enrolled in the primary school program shall progress through the curriculum at their individual learning rates.

(4) Parents and legal guardians of children enrolled in the primary school program shall receive regular reports at a minimum of four (4) times per year regarding the children's individual progress in meeting the goals of education set fourth in KRS 158.645(1) and successful completion of the primary school program.

Section 5. Implementation.

(1) By June 15, 1992, each elementary school shall submit an action plan to the Department of Education describing the steps to be taken for beginning implementation in 1992-93 and full implementation by 1993-94 in order to implement the primary school program as described in this regulation. The procedures and instructions for the plan are contained in "Procedures for Developing the Primary Program Action Plan," effective date of April 1992, which is hereby incorporated by reference. This document may be inspected,

copied, and obtained at the Kentucky Department of Education, Division of Early Childhood, 21st Floor, Capital Plaza Tower, 500 Mero Street, Frankfort, Kentucky 40601, Monday - Friday, 8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

(2) Beginning June 1, 1993, each elementary school shall submit an annual evaluation report to the Department of Education describing the steps to be taken to improve the quality of the primary school program. The evaluation report shall follow the format contained in "Procedures for Developing the Primary Program Action Plan" document cited in subsection (1) of this section.

(3) The action plan and subsequent evaluation reports shall include input from parents, teachers and support staff of children enrolled in the primary school program. The action plan and subsequent evaluation reports shall be adopted by the school-based decision making council if one exists, or by the local district superintendent if the school does not have a council.

(4) Each elementary school shall make the action plan and subsequent evaluation reports available for public inspection. A copy of the action plan and subsequent evaluation reports shall be kept on file by the local school district superintendent. (18 Ky.R.3559; Am.19 Ky.R. 397; eff.8-1-92.)

703 KAR 4:040 Interim Methods for Verifying Successful Completion of the Primary Program.

RELATES TO: KRS 158.030, KRS 158.6451

STATUTORY AUTHORITY: KRS 158.030, 156.070

NECESSITY AND FUNCTION: KRS 158.030 requires the State Board for Elementary and Secondary Education to promulgate and administrative regulation establishing methods for verifying successful completion of the primary school program. Successful completion must be defined in terms of student achievement of the goals set forth in KRS 158.6451.

Section 1. The determinations of successful completion of the Primary Program shall be made on an individual student basis.

Section 2. Ongoing evidence to support the determination shall include teacher observations and anecdotal records, student products or performances, and evidence of student self-reflection or assessment.

Section 3. The development of the student exiting the Primary Program shall be consistent with performance expectations which would support student success in the fourth grade.

Section 4. A school team, which includes the parent of the identified child, will consider and recommend the appropriate early or delayed exit for any student in the primary program. Such review will take place at least thirty (30) days before such decision takes effect.

Section 5.

(1) Consistent with the six (6) learning goals of KRS 158.6451, the following shall be the focus for determining student eligibility to exit the Primary Program:
  (a) Student expresses himself clearly and effectively in oral and written form;
  (b) Student processes oral and written information as evidenced through listening and reading;
  (c) Student demonstrates confidence in his ability to communicate;
  (d) Student applies mathematical procedures to problem-solving;
  (e) Student applies mathematical concepts including computation,

measurement, estimation, and geometry;

(f) Student collects, displays, and interprets data;

(g) Student demonstrates use of monetary values in an economic system;

(h) Student demonstrates appropriate and relevant investigation skills to solve specific problems in real life situations;

(i) Student creatively expresses ideas and feelings;

(j) Student applies democratic principles in relationships with peers;

(k) Student identifies contributions of diverse individuals, groups, and cultures;

(l) Student demonstrates responsibility for personal belongings;

(m) Student shows respect for the property and rights of others;

(n) Student displays self-control and self-discipline;

(o) Student accesses appropriate resources for learning in school, at home, and in the community;

(p) Student participates in group activities cooperatively;

(q) Student chooses appropriate processes and strategies to solve given problems; and,

(r) Student applies previously learned knowledge and concepts to new situations.

Section 6.

(1) To determine whether students can accomplish the above, teachers shall:

 (a) collect a variety of student work samples;

 (b) complete observational checklists of academic, social, and developmental progress; and

 (c) maintain anecdotal records.

APPENDIX C

Using Television For School Readiness

Television viewing is common for children of all ages. The authors felt that parents should be encouraged to use television in a positive, growth-producing way. This information is intended to be supportive of parent's role in this area.

Television as an Educational Medium

Newton Minow, former chairman of the Federal Communications Commission, said in a recent speech that "...all of television is education. The question is, what are we teaching, and what are we learning?" [1]

Indeed, there is broad agreement among researchers that television does have an impact on children, and that programs that are properly designed and executed can provide strongly positive educational and developmental experiences. Among the principal conclusions suggested by the review of literature on the subject conducted for this report are the following:

1. **Television viewing is an active experience that can have both positive and negative outcomes.**

That is, the medium itself is not inherently good or bad. The variables considered most important by researchers are the type and content of the programs viewed and the uses viewers make of those programs. The outcome of a television viewing experience is therefore a result of the interaction between the viewer and the medium.

2. **The context in which television is viewed is an important determinant in its effects.**

This observation is considered particularly true for young children, who are generally less familiar with the accepted conventions and artifices of television. The social context in which children watch television, and the influence, intervention and commentary of adults and other viewers have a significant impact on how children perceive television, and on what they retain after the set is turned off.

3. **The influence of television is gradual and cumulative.**

This model of cumulative influence is distinguished by the subtle and gradual incorporation of frequent and repeated messages. While this observation is intuitively obvious to anyone who has been regularly exposed to television advertising, it represents a type of influence that is particularly difficult to measure with current methods.

In sum, when considering television's potential for positive or negative impact on viewers, particularly young viewers, it is important to weigh the content and intention of the programming being watched; the expectations of the viewers, and, in the case of children, the guidance provided by parents, other adults or older children who may be watching with them; and the persistence or continuity of the kind of programming being watched.

Evaluation of Concerns About Television

Over the years, some social critics have advanced arguments that television contributes to a variety of social ills. In the view of many researchers, the proper focus of these concerns is the content of television programming rather than television per se; this report does not question the assertion that television that is inappropriate for children can have a negative effect on them.

Unfortunately, fully 95 percent of the average child's television viewing involves programs that are not specifically produced for children[2] It is the hope of public broadcasters and others concerned with children's welfare that the increased availability of appropriate children's programming through a national ready-to-learn service would increase children's viewing of appropriate television, but even that outcome cannot necessarily be expected to "counteract" the negative effects of inappropriate television viewing. In any case, some of the primary concerns raised by critics of television are discussed below, along with the highlights of available research that address their concerns.

Displacement

One concern advanced by critics of television is that it influences learning and social behavior by displacing other activities, such as reading, family interaction, and active play with peers. This hypothesis seems intuitively reasonable, since people do spend time on a daily basis watching television.

Benchmark studies conducted 30 years ago, when television was a relative newcomer, did show television displacing other entertainment media. However, there is no clear evidence that such displacement is occurring today. Further, for many children television viewing is itself an active experience, accompanied by physical activity (e.g., imitating actions), social interaction (e.g., talking with others present), and active mental processing. For these reasons, a number of researchers have suggested that the impact of displacement is not nearly as extreme or dramatic as the medium's most vociferous critics would suggest.

A reduction in reading skills, for example, is one influence that critics of television persistently point to as evidence of the negative impact of displacement, and there is a slight correlation between heavy viewing of entertainment programming and poor reading skills. [3]

On the other hand, there is strong evidence that some television viewing (between two and four hours for young children) is positively related to reading skills. Specifically, children who watch television [4] and become involved with books as a result, for example, through programs such as public television's "Reading Rainbow" and "Ghostwriter," are more apt to become good readers... [5]

As a result of studies such as these, many researchers have concluded that television's alleged displacement of reading skills, if it exists at all, is more a product of the kinds of programs children view, and the uses they and their families make of television, than it is of television per se.

Effects on Cognitive Processing

Some critics have suggested that television affects the very structure of the thought process; that its generally fast pacing, for example, reduces children's attention spans and willingness to persevere in problem-solving.

An extensive review of the literature on television, conducted for the U.S. Department of Education[6] concluded that there is little evidence to support the idea that television as a medium has any effects on such cognitive processes as attention, creativity or "attention span." In one experiment, for example, children watched an hour of either fast-paced or slower-paced television programming; no effects on subsequent attention or perseverance were noted by the experimenters[7] The difficulty of designing long-term controlled experiments has generally precluded research on any such possible effects of large and continuing "doses" of viewing.

Some studies have suggested, however, that the content of programs viewed (rather than simply the fact that they were television programs) may have an effect on attention. One study of children who watched children's programming typical of commercial broadcasting did in fact show some reduced perseverance, or increased impulsiveness.[8]

On the other hand, a similar study of children who watched "Mister Roger's Neighborhood," the content of which has been carefully designed for positive educational value, showed increased persistence in everyday tasks in their preschool.[9]

Thus, research into television's allegedly negative effects on cognitive processing reaffirms the importance of the content of programs viewed by children: if the programming is designed with the developmental needs of children in mind, its effects can be quite positive.

Passivity

Another issue some critics have raised regarding television is that it encourages passive intellectual processing and a passive approach to life. Again, however, this perception may be strongly colored by the content of the majority of American television, and the context in which most adults view television.

Most adults treat television viewing as an occasion to relax; most programming in America is light entertainment, or at least undemanding entertainment. Thus, most American adults do exert less mental effort when they encounter television than when they encounter print.

Children, however, process television quite actively, focusing their attention on content that is comprehensible and interesting to them. They do "turn off" when the content is either dull or beyond their comprehension, which is the case for much of the general-audience programming on television. These programs use narrative conventions that most children do not understand (e.g., children often fail to draw inferences from implicit information), and assume an understanding of the adult world that young children do not possess.

As a result, children may indeed appear passive when watching television that is oriented toward adult viewers. However, when program content -- including both the information presented and the way it is presented -- is designed with the understanding and capabilities of children in mind, children can have a very active experience with television.

Achievement in School

Finally, some critics have argued that television reduces academic skill, and cite studies suggesting that children who watch a great deal of television do poorly in school.

However, there is very little evidence that television is a cause of reduced school achievement. In fact, the preponderance of evidence indicates the opposite: that television viewing is not a causative factor in school achievement.

There is, however, evidence that children who watch a moderate amount of television perform better in school than nonviewers, perhaps because they seek and process information from a variety of different sources. (These results are similar to the effects noted on reading skills cited above.)

In sum, most of the negative concerns voiced about television, to the extent they are documented to exist at all, are more a product of the kinds of programming that children watch on television and the ways in which they use television, rather than a consequence of the medium of television per se.

Current Programs for Preschool Children

Having identified the kinds of programming and related efforts that could best improve the school readiness of our nation's preschoolers, it may be helpful to examine briefly the programs and services that currently exist....

"Sesame Street" is commended for over a quarter of a century of service to millions of viewers around the world: "Overall, evidence supports the conclusion that "Sesame Street" enhances learning, especially of basic skills. This historic, pioneering effort --a creative collaboration between the federal government and the private sector -- has contributed, and continues to contribute dramatically to the school readiness of children."[10]

Similarly, "Mister Roger's Neighborhood" is described as "yet another example of television's 'promise fulfilled.' Children who watch Mister Rogers develop feelings of self-worth.... A recent study at day care centers in Ohio found that "Mister Roger's Neighborhood" helped children become more cooperative, self-confident and creative. Viewers of the program were less aggressive than nonviewers and made greater gains in their verbal skills. Teachers noted that they also became better conversationalists."[11]

Other series on public television that benefit preschool viewers are also cited including:

"Long Ago & Far Away," which uses a wide variety of techniques to dramatize outstanding children's literature. The series has included programs based on classics such "The Pied Piper" and "The Wind in the Willows," as well as fables and folk tales from cultures around the world....

"Barney & Friends," which is the home of an incredibly popular 6-foot purple dinosaur. Barney uses his magic, good sense and limitless love of children to help his young human friends understand and face their fears and concerns. The program shows children engaging in many different kinds of physical activities and includes a tremendous variety of classic children's songs.

"Lamb Chop's Play Along," which has introduced a new generation to the peculiar charms of the most lovable sock in all the world, Shari Lewis' Lamb Chop. This series' goal, in Lewis' words, is to "turn viewers into doers" by encouraging children to join in a wide variety of physical and mental activities, including singing, counting, rhyming, jumping and marching.

Also cited is "Reading Rainbow," even though the series' primary audience is beginning readers, who are typically older than preschoolers. Each episode of "Reading Rainbow" brings an outstanding children's book to life through a dramatic reading accompanied by animations of the book's illustrations. The programs often include a real-world field trip to a location related to the featured book that helps young readers connect the experience of reading with more concrete experiences; children delivering their own book reviews are another regular feature. While intended for youngsters who have started to read, the series' positive depictions of the rewards of reading are of value to younger children as well.

Excerpted from Public Broadcasting: Ready to Teach: How Public Broadcasting Can Serve the Ready-to-Learn Needs of American's Children. A Report to the 103rd Congress and the American People. Pursuant to P.L. 102-356. Feb. 5, 1993.

(In Kentucky, public television is provided by Kentucky Educational Television, WKPC-Channel 15 and WKYU-Channel 24.)

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11. Idem.

GLOSSARY

Photo by Rick McComb

GLOSSARY

Ability Grouping: refers to the separation of children in classrooms on the basis of perceived capability determined by standardized test scores, teacher assessment and information provided by parent and student. Generally, students are separated into high-, average- and low-achieving groups. Groupings may remain together for the complete school day or they may be regrouped for each subject.

Active Child Involvement: exploring actively with all the senses by choosing, manipulating, changing and/or combining real materials to discover relationships. Example: Young children are more likely to understand science concepts if they select seeds, plant them and experiment with water and sunlight, than by reading about photosynthesis in a textbook.

Anecdotal Record: a written record of a child's progress based on development. Teachers record what happens throughout the day while learning activities are occurring. Written notes are made when appropriate and are not forced. In other words, you may go a few days without reporting on a particular child if there is nothing to record. This method is informal and encourages the use of a note pad, sticky notes, a checklist with space for notes and computer entries. Continuous comments are recorded about what a child can do as opposed to what he/she cannot do.

Authentic Activities: activities that reflect real life situations such as writing a thank you letter for a birthday gift. Objects and materials that will be used throughout life such as real books, road maps, globes, seeds and soil are used in authentic activities.

Authentic Assessment: before assessment takes place, criterion are set and students are helped to understand what is expected. Children then demonstrate proficiency by completing tasks, taking part in events or completing projects. Children are assessed based on improvement of previous work, not in comparison to other students. Emphasis is placed on what children can do and demonstrate with the knowledge, skills and concepts they have learned.

Basal Anthologies: a textbook containing a collection of authentic literature such as poems, anecdotes, short stories or plays written by well known authors.

Basal reader: an instructional textbook for reading based on sequential but isolated skill building and leveled reading material, like the Dick and Jane series. Content of the books is organized around the degree of reading difficulty.

Big books: oversized books that can be purchased or made by students.

Box It/Bag It: a math program which provides manipulatives and "hands on" experiences. Children interact with real objects such as counters, coins, game boards and other concrete objects to build math concepts and understandings.

Brainstorming: the quick compiling or jotting down of ideas based on a question, problem or situation.

Buddy reading: two students working together, reading aloud together, reading to each other for the purpose of improving reading skills and fluency. This could be children of the same age, or children of differing ages with the younger listening or reading to the older student.

Collaboration: two or more classroom teachers, aides, itinerant, special education, special area or resource teachers, parents or community representatives, planning for and working together to help students learn.

Continuous Progress: a student's unique progression through school at his or her own rate without comparison to others. Retention, promotion and assigned letter grades are not compatible with continuous progress. The curriculum and expectations for student performance in a continuous progress program are not linked to the child's age or number of years in school.

Contract for learning: a method of individualized instruction that communicates to each child which learning activities the teacher has assigned. It is often a colorful card or attractive instruction sheet that lists the types of learning activities each individual child or small group will be asked to complete. It is a way for teachers to direct children's learning on an individual basis and encourages the children to take responsibility for their own learning. It also helps the teacher monitor and evaluate children's learning. The contract is used in conferences with children and family members to discuss progress and to assess outcomes. An example might be: Complete these three activities in the listening center and then choose one more activity that most interests you.

Conventional Spelling: standard English spelling.

Photo by Rick McComb

Cooperative Learning: an extensively researched instructional method in which students are heterogeneously grouped to produce maximum academic and social gains. Students are individually accountable for their learning, yet also experience a sense of interdependency for the success of their group.

Critical thinking: a skill that requires thoughtful consideration of many aspects of a problem; the process of thinking through, analyzing and evaluating all sides of a problem or issue, determining the best of many answers. This is important in children's lives because problem solving is and will be increasingly important. For example, the student may be asked to compare and contrast the reasons for living in Kentucky versus living in the rain forest instead of simply listing reasons for living in both areas.

Curriculum Framework: a statewide guide to help curriculum development and instructional decision-making at the local level. The framework for Kentucky's Primary Program will identify teaching and assessment strategies, instructional material resources, ideas on how to incorporate the resources of the community, a directory of model teaching sites and alternative ways of using school time.

Developmentally Appropriate Educational Practices: teaching methods that take into account children's development. These would include an integrated curriculum, active child involvement and interaction, use of manipulatives and multi-sensory activities, a balance of teacher-directed and child-initiated activities, varied instructional strategies, real books, assignment of problems using familiar situations and flexible groupings and regroupings. For example: young children are normally active and find it hard to sit still for long periods of time without talking to others. Active involvement allows them to move around in the classroom, use their hands with real objects and talk with other students while learning.

Developmentally Appropriate Environments: those environments (usually classrooms) that match needs for developmentally appropriate teaching. Included might be real books; tables or grouped desks instead of rows of separated desks; shelves with easily accessed materials for a wide range of uses by children; a print rich classroom with lots of interesting children's literature; a home-like setting; and places to display children's work.

Photo by Rick McComb

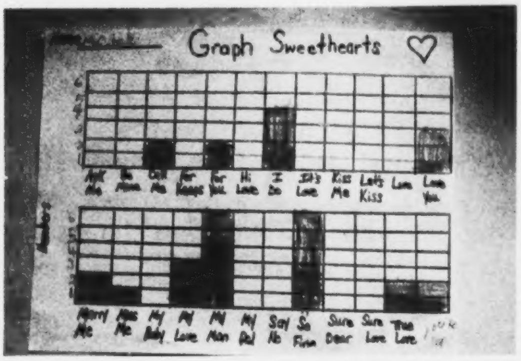
Discovery Learning: provides real life experiences for children that help them learn key concepts on their own. For example, using batteries, wires and small light bulbs to make circuits allows children to discover electricity.

Edit: proofreading a draft in order to correct spelling, grammar, punctuation and layout.

Family Grouping: a group of students who stay with the same classmates and teacher(s) for more than one year. For example, in a multiage grouping of 6-, 7- and 8-year-olds, approximately a third of the class stays the same, a third would move to fourth grade and a third would be new to the class. A child could be in this class for three years.

Genre: kind or form of literature. Examples include biographies or folktales.

Graphing: putting information gathered by children into a visual form. For example, in graphing the weather, children might draw pictures of sunshine, clouds, rain or snow, place them on a bulletin board in a row and each day mark what the weather has been. At the end of the month, children see how many rainy or sunny days there had been.



Heterogeneous Grouping: a grouping pattern in which all students, regardless of ability, sex, age, race or achievement are grouped together.

Homogeneous Grouping: a grouping pattern based on similarities such as age, ability, or achievement.

Integrated Curriculum: combining subjects instead of teaching each in isolation to help students learn in a meaningful and more interesting way. Whole language and writing across the curriculum are examples of integrated curriculum approaches. For example: after discovering circuits in science, children might write about a time that their electricity went off and might read about and complete a report on Thomas Edison.

Integrating Reading/Language Arts: using trade books or a combination of trade books and basal textbooks to provide listening, speaking, reading and writing learning experiences.

Invented Spelling: young children's made-up attempts to spell unknown words using letter sounds or phonics.

KERA: the Kentucky Education Reform Act of 1990, a comprehensive education reform law. One provision of this law requires replacing grades kindergarten, first, second and third with the primary school program.

Language Arts: all the skills of communication including reading, writing, speaking, listening and thinking.

Literature-Based Instruction: using good literature to teach reading. The language arts components (spelling, grammar, and so on) and content areas are taught around a particular book or piece of literature. Many books and pieces that represent a wide range of literature, such as fiction, nonfiction and poetry are needed for this approach.

Manipulatives: concrete or hands on instructional materials such as counters, coins, blocks, clocks and games used in the classroom to introduce and reinforce skills (especially in math). Using manipulatives is developmentally appropriate for young children who learn better by using real objects.

Multiple Intelligences: according to Howard Gardner, "all human beings develop at least seven different ways of knowing the world. Each of these ways can be defined as a separate intelligence." Gardner identified these seven intelligences as linguistic, logical-mathematical, musical, spatial, bodily-kinesthetic, interpersonal and intrapersonal.

Nongraded School: a school that is organized so that the children may develop academic and creative talents as rapidly or slowly as individual abilities permit.

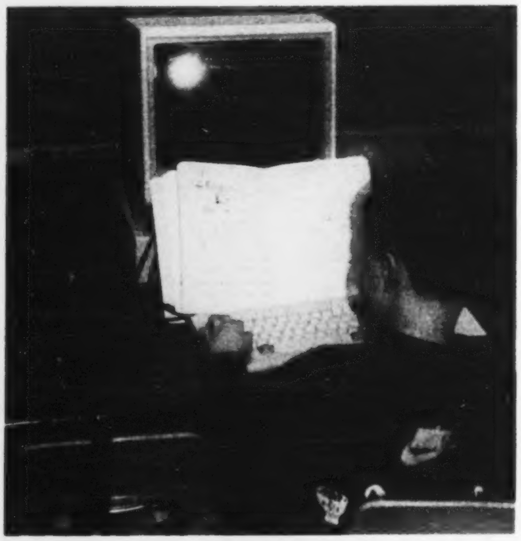
Outcome: the ability to complete tasks that have application to "real life" and are valued by the student and the adult world. (From: Council on School Performance Standards)

Performance Assessment: assessment based on a child's actual performance in the classroom as opposed to simple answer, multiple choice or true/false tests or written assignments. Children must actually demonstrate that they understand and can do what they have learned. For example, children will be asked to actually measure the area of their classroom as opposed to a paper/pencil test which gives the length and width and asks children to calculate the area.

Performance Standard: a set of criteria used to evaluate the level of performance.

Positive Parent Involvement: the establishment of helpful relationships between the school and the home, individuals or groups. Communication, achievement and understanding are enhanced when children interact with people, places and things, both in school and at home.

Process Writing: a planned writing approach for students which consists of prewriting, drafting, revising and editing before completing a final piece of writing.



Professional Teamwork: classroom, special education, special area, itinerant and resource teachers having regular opportunities to share information and plan the instructional program together. They may use team teaching, collaborative teaching, peer coaching, and so on, in order to meet the diverse needs of students and provide support and assistance for each other.

Publish: the final preparation of a piece of writing for a particular audience.

Qualitative Reporting Methods: regular home-school communication which describes how and what the child is learning, individual accomplishments, interests, abilities, and attitudes. Progress is described in terms of the continuous growth and development of the whole child without comparison to other children. Reporting may include progress reports, conferences, portfolios, journals, videotapes and anecdotal records.

Shared Reading: the reading of a story by an adult, sometimes with large-sized books suitable for all children to see, or a student reading books or his/her own stories to other students or teachers.

Teacher-Directed Learning: using a variety of methods to challenge students to explore or think about things they are studying. Teacher-directed strategies may include posing questions, suggesting ways to explore a topic or lesson, providing information, assigning work to children, checking for right and wrong answers and creating developmentally appropriate classrooms and daily schedules.

Team Teaching: a way to organize classes so that two or more teachers are responsible for a group of children. These teachers plan together, teach together and agree upon

Photo by Rick McComb

supportive roles and division of responsibilities. Schools often use this organizational pattern to develop a sense of belonging. Team teaching allows children to work in a variety of multiage settings with a variety of learning environments. It also allows instruction and assessment by teachers who may have different strengths and teaching styles.

Thematic Approach to Curriculum: an approach that motivates students to investigate interesting ideas from several perspectives. A central theme is used to develop the concepts, generalizations, skills and attitudes. Themes should encourage integration of various content areas. The rationale is grounded in a philosophy that young children learn best when subjects are combined in interesting ways and when they are actively engaged in inquiry. These themes may be broad based or narrow in scope; may be used for one class, designated classes or the whole school; and may last for a few weeks up to several months. Skills, concepts and understandings are taught within the context of these themes.

Tracking: designated groupings, which can last through the duration of schooling, reflecting student's abilities or interests. There may be tracks for slow, average and fast learners. In high school there may be tracks for college-bound students, vocational education, and so on. ("The Wonder Years," page 114.)

Trade Books: any book other than instructional text books. The books listed in "Reading with Children" are examples of trade books.

Whole Child Orientation: instruction which takes into consideration the educational, physical, emotional, social, intellectual and creative or artistic growth and development of each individual.

Whole Language: an approach to teaching which supports the understanding that listening, speaking, writing and reading are not isolated but are necessary for every subject area. Language should be taught as a "whole," not in fragmented skills. Whole language classrooms are characterized by reading real story books and chapter books, story telling and story reading by the teacher, student writing, student choice, self direction, risk taking, emphasis on meaning and comprehension, and reading skill lessons based on individual diagnosis.

Writing Across the Curriculum: incorporating writing activities into science, social studies, math and other subjects as appropriate.

Photo by Rick McComb

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Goals for Kentucky Schools

(a) Schools shall expect a high level of achievement of all students.

(b) Schools shall develop their students' ability to:

1. Use basic communication and mathematics skills for purposes and situations they will encounter throughout their lives;

2. Apply core concepts and principles from mathematics, the sciences, the arts, the humanities, social studies, and practical living studies to situations they will encounter throughout their lives;

3. Become a self-sufficient individual;

4. Become responsible members of a family, work group, or community, including demonstrating effectiveness in community service;

5. Think and solve problems in school situations and in a variety of situations they will encounter in life; and

6. Connect and integrate experiences and new knowledge from all subject matter fields with what they have previously learned and build on past learning experiences to acquire new information through various media sources.

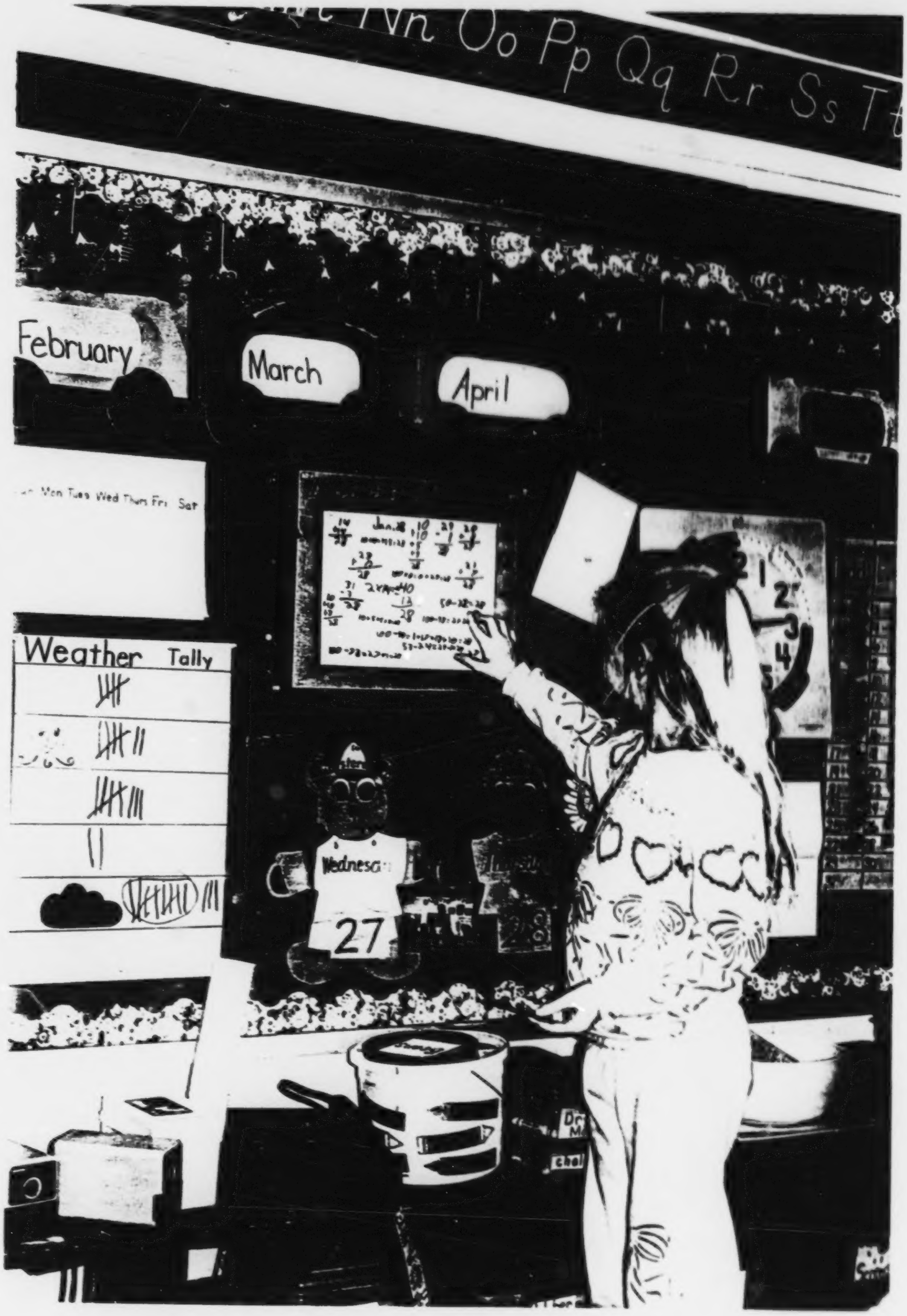
(c) Schools shall increase their students' rate of school attendance.

(d) Schools shall reduce their students' dropout and retention rates.

(e) Schools shall reduce physical and mental health barriers to learning.

(f) Schools shall be measured on the proportion of students who make a successful transition to work, post-secondary education, and the military.

Source: Kentucky Revised Statutes, Section 158.6451.



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